

The Military Strategy of Women and Children

butch lee

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THE MILITARY STRATEGY OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN



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The Military Strategy of Women and Children

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Chapters 1,2 and 3 of this book were published in somewhat different form in the Amazon journal *Bottomfish Blues* in the late 1980s. The Postscript *There's Fighting in Iraq but the Real Women's War is in Afrika*, has been published by *8th Route Readers Club* and *Crossroad*, and is available on the internet at <http://www.kersplebedeb.com/afrika.html>



Introduction

IMPORTANT NOTE TO THE READER

The words that follow should be understood not as newly found ideas but as geological strata underneath our feet. Almost twenty years ago i began an exploration to answer one question—*how can women make revolutionary change?* These first few essays/chapters represent ideas that radical women as a whole were trying to use as starting tools against patriarchy. We were focused on what might happen if the world majority of women *didn't* learn to take over the leadership of the national liberation movements that were then reshaping the world. We were looking especially at what had developed out of the popular “socialist” revolutions like China and Vietnam which carried the hopes of many millions of oppressed women.

So these early essays represent both that period and a time of transition. During those years this first part was published in somewhat different form in the Amazon journal, *Bottomfish Blues*. Before we fully understood that both the states created by the anti-colonial revolutions of the 20th century *and* our own Women's Liberation movement itself had been taken over by a careerist, pro-capitalist species. We were not so separate as we believed, but part of a complex, larger tide that we had only started to understand.

Appearing in an underground radical feminist journal that was published only sporadically and distributed somewhat randomly, these early chapters had to be shaped to stand alone. We knew that perhaps some sister would read one episode but never see another. So there is some duplication and repetitiveness of ideas, which i can only ask you to be patient about.

Now women are at a nodal point of change, for those hopeful mass revolutions of the 20th century are gone. *Women everywhere are left unable to answer the violent repression and miniaturization that is women's life.* It is a new period in world politics, and i'm not so disoriented as to believe that the answers to a new time can come from reading old documents. But since there is no women's history, no women's world politics yet, i offer this past radical feminist work as stones in the future foundation of our liberation.

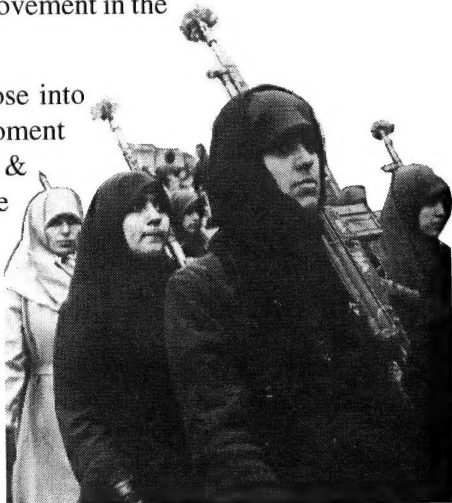
i'll admit that i was tempted to rewrite everything, but we don't have years to update essays. It's a new world crisis for women & children. From forced mass exiles and famines, millions dying in the AIDS plague and the acceleration in the slave trade in women all over the world... to the new men's sport of slaughtering women. To live we need to move into the future. Life, we know, is not just that somehow in some shape we physically survive. Life is being able to do what you choose. To have the power that is ours.

Now i am still working to answer *how can women make revolutionary change?* No longer as equality with men or taking a role in men's revolutions, but overthrowing the world of men.

Right now "post-feminist" women in the capitalist metropolis think life is just getting better & better. Hillary, women's pro sports, flying jets over the Third World bombing away, and business opportunities, too. Who woulda imagined? It couldn't be whiter for us. I think we are like those newly-enfranchised German women in the liberal Weimar Republic days during 1919-1933. Sleep walking on the edge of the precipice. For patriarchal capitalism is always dangerous for us. Deadly dangerous.

The approaching tidal wave should alert us. In country after country, right wing men are re-enslaving women as a subhuman class. You know this already, don't you? This is the largest mass political movement in the world by far. Let that sink into your mind, sis—the largest political movement in the world of men.

A counter-trend also rose into life in this same historic moment of intertwined danger & opportunity. And the counter-trend is not liberalism but the arming of women in politics. But this counter-trend has been co-opted into the recruiting of women as soldiers in patriarchal armies. Whether in



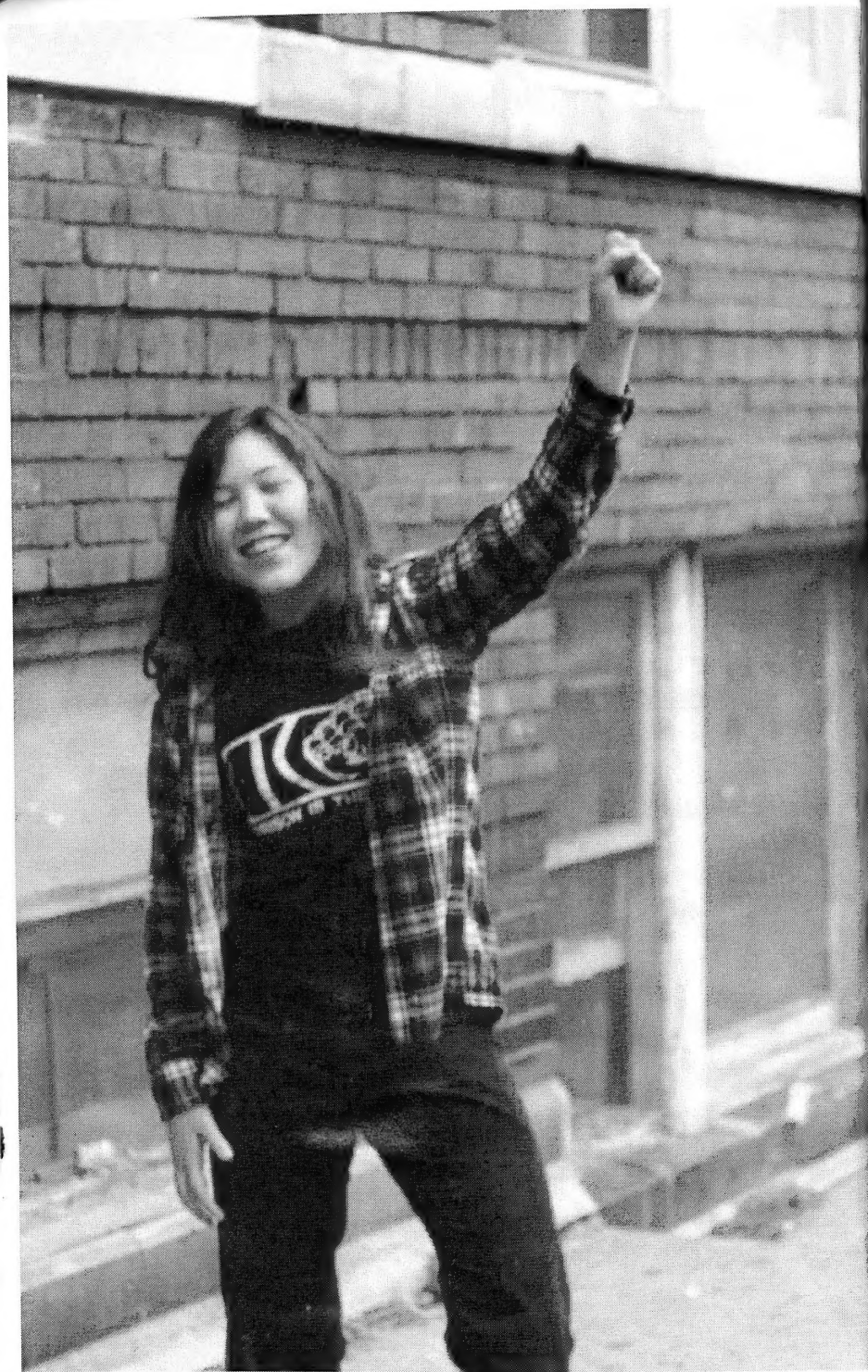
Nicaragua, the Militia Movement, or the u.s. Air Force. Indeed, as the u.s. military strains to cover the globe it would literally collapse without women soldiers. While still women have no army of our own, no foreign policy that is ours, no rescue force, no territory, no home base. No home.

In these first three chapters we are restarting from ground zero. For our most basic understanding of how women should even think of civilization must be questioned. Many things have happened since these chapters were written, but the main trend of global events has only added momentum to the direction my exploration took. The same is true for those outriders of Women's intellectual advance. Among others, Octavia Butler, Christina Thurmer-Rohr, Suzy McKee Charnas, and Maria Mies*, have lit up the terrain in flashes ahead of us.

Now, in this exploration, we are moving onto the ground of meta-politics. Wild, vast and more primal than the little, fenced-in suburban plots of what amerikkka calls "politics". From the rape bordellos of the Balkans to the mass murder by AIDS in Afrika, women are being pushed to understand men's society and, most importantly, ourselves, in a different way. The longest Amazon journey begins today.



* These first chapters relied heavily on Maria Mies' book, *Patriarchy & Accumulation On a World Scale*. i want to acknowledge her pioneering work, but also to note that these early chapters were written during the 1980s when Mies' book had met with little interest here with u.s. women and had gone out of print. With her study unavailable, i wanted to keep her research in women's sight the best i could. For more about these authors see inside back cover.



"Amazon isn't a dot.com, it's about killing men"

"Adolf Hitler allegedly dreamed of fighting a trio of naked Amazons riding through space. He broke his spear against one of them in a vain attempt to kill her, for he was sure the Amazons were really Jews."

—Judy Grahn

Why should we need Amazons? Women have always killed men. From time way out of mind. Prisons are full of women who stabbed men, shot holes in men's precious bodies, ran men over with cars, poisoned men, beat men to death with some real "heavy metal" as they slept. X-ray through your lying local newspaper, you'll see. Nothing new. So still & again, Amazon isn't a dot.com, it's about killing men & the gender male.

Why should we need Amazons? Women have always fought in men's wars. Been soldiers. Look backwards and forwards in time, we're there. Not the myth, not the men. *Us*. Even in feudal Japan, one of the greatest Samurai warriors of the 13th century was the maiden Tomoe, of whom the Kamakura records that in one battle "*when all the others had been slain, among the last seven rode Tomoe.*" In World War II, during the terrible fighting retreat from the invading Nazi armies, the desperate Soviets threw into aerial combat thousands of volunteer women pilots in makeshift squadrons led by women. In Italy some 30,000 armed women fought in the Partisan guerrillas against the fascists. So these G.I. Janes in khaki flying u.s. army helicopters stuff is nothing new except maybe to us. We who don't remember who we are.



Even Adolf Hitler, who was scared shitless of us, needed women much more than we wanna admit. While he was in prison and afterwards, after his 1923 Munich macho disaster, *women* not men held his puny party together. *"I left jail after thirteen months imprisonment to find they had sustained the movement,"* Hitler admitted. Nazi dicks bailed, but us women were a rock. Isn't that a time-hammered cliché?

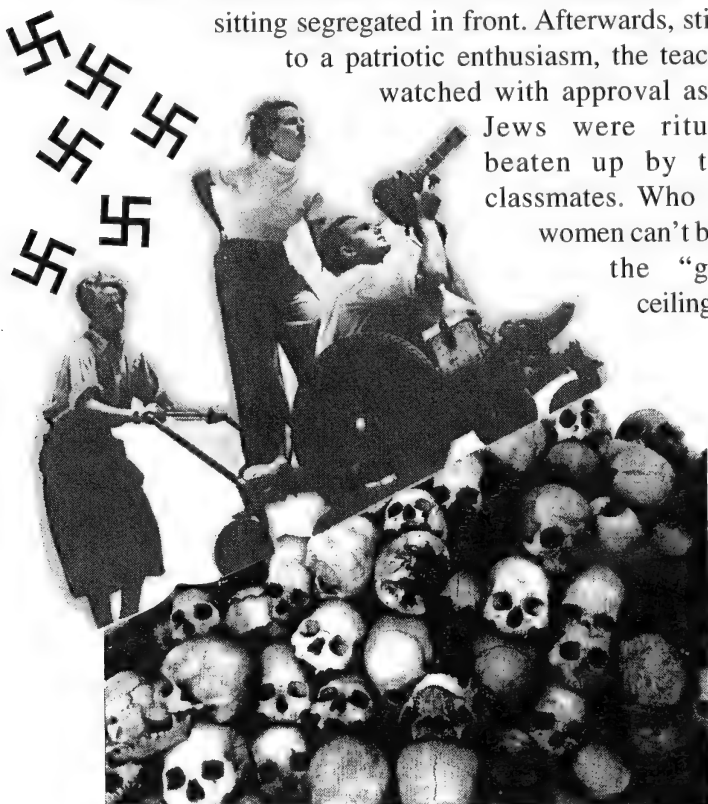
Then Hitler needed a whole new level of propaganda for his politics, whose followers had to be swept into leaving all known moral compass points behind them. So over the sexist objections of his men Hitler personally empowered filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl to be a key propagandist for him. Her brilliant movie "Triumph of the Will" was the cultural equivalent of the famous Nazi high explosive aerial bombing-annihilation of the city of Guernica. One German Jew who survived remembers how his entire high school

had to watch her film, with the few Jewish students sitting segregated in front. Afterwards, stirred to a patriotic enthusiasm, the teachers

watched with approval as the

Jews were ritually beaten up by their classmates. Who says

women can't break the "glass ceiling"?



Even his personal pilot at war's end was a girl. Hitler trusted only Hanna Reitsch, Germany's top test pilot, to fly him in and out of a besieged Berlin increasingly covered by Allied fighter planes. Hanna truly was an adventurer but the total opposite of Amazons like Harriet Tubman. On her last trip, her little plane shot up and her co-pilot badly wounded, the Soviet tanks and air squadrons swallowing Berlin, she begged her Fuhrer for permission to stay and fight by his side until the end (bad patriarchal soap operas with loyal women, will they never end?). Hitler refused, ordering her to escape.



Hanna Reitsch

Which Hanna did, to... Ghana's Afrikan liberation leader Kwame Nkrumah. Always adventuring by finding new men to serve, Hanna Reitsch was passed from Hitler to Indian President Nehru to Ghana's President Nkrumah. Who trusted her as a valuable assistant. Nkrumah had big schemes, of Hanna using her Nazi experience to home-grow an Afrikan air force for him. The same way that the German military did after defeat in World War I. He planned for a glider corps for boys creating a new mass pilot base & aviation infrastructure. It didn't come to pass, but Hanna was busy busy. Since Hanna never gave up serving her beloved white men, it was inevitable that she was also doubling as a secret intelligence source reporting to the u.s. embassy on Nkrumah's anti-colonial plans.

So why should we need Amazons? There is no men's cause, no matter how holy or evil, that women have not only been the sacrifices for but adventured in, fought for and killed over. So we *really* don't need to romanticize over some lost Amazon in his-story, over some woman warrior or adventurer or other. Let's take our abilities for granted. We can really walk that walk.



World War II: Soviet pilots report back after combat mission

As Jessica Amanda Salmonson writes in her Amazon books:
"Restless as the moon, in every human epoch the female of our species has soldiered and adventured, to great sorrow, and great reward... The histories of every nation, culture and society reveal, however reluctantly, countless Amazon figures."

It's on us to know the full dimensions of what this means. For just as we are not myths, neither are we simply soldiers and adventurers. **Amazons fight for justice, for womankind.** Inescapably, our Amazon lives are political. This is what the capitalist patriarchy tries to suppress about us above all else. And Amazons are about killing men. Not some of them but the entire gender. We want them to be an endangered species, because in the end either they or we will be. I noticed in my medical book the funny line, "Complete tracheal obstruction is incompatible with life." Men as a social construction are incompatible with women's lives. *Now, this is a challenge worthy of women's abilities.*

Even when us grrls discuss Amazons, too much emphasis is put simply on sisters who are physically daring or who gatecrash into men's roles. As though that's what makes us Amazons.

The rainbow of women's strengths and abilities have always been grudgingly used by men. Most especially when they've been in trouble. When the capitalist patriarchy wanted to raise a memorial in Washington, D.C. to the 50,000 dicks who died while invading Vietnam *and* killing over a million Vietnamese women and children, they ran into trouble. They discovered that their own white men's military art was such a crude cliché that it became a mockery of itself. So head dicks had to call in Maya Lin, an Asian-American woman architect/designer, to do their men's memorial dignifying the rapists & killers of Asian women. "*Women can do anything!*" is a two-edged sword.

Isn't that a common contradiction for us? The "wow" look-at-what-we-can-do syndrome. Mindless applause of how men use us. While it might be understandable that it means so much to us when men let us do something significant for them, it is not any longer forgivable. Enough is enough. Keep in mind that embarrassing question that men ask (when we should be asking it): *What is she doing there?*

During Operation Desert Storm some tv newsman was interviewing G.I.s sweating in the Saudi sun assembling 500 lb bombs. He zeroed in on one woman G.I. lifting heavy steel bomb casings, muscular and glistening with sweat in her tanktop. "Why are you doing this?" She looked at the jerk, grinned and replied: "It sure beats being a secretary." Lots of us can see it that way.



We take advantage of the openings that the patriarchy makes—for its own reasons—in order to do real things in a world still owned by men. But having a role in *their* armies isn't anything like being warriors in a women's army. We have nothing until we build for ourselves. That's the contradiction we can't escape. Those 500 lb bombs she put together for dick were exploding in the middle of Arab women and children. Filling men's roles—it's not just an adventure.

42 N Friday, August 23, 2002 Chicago Sun-Times

NEWS



Leni Riefenstahl (center) celebrates her 100th birthday Thursday near Munich, Germany, with entertainers Siegfried (left) and Roy.

Nazi filmmaker turns 100 amid new probe

Riefenstahl used camp victims as extras, group says

Iris Pinkepank, spokeswoman for Rom, said her group could prove that many of those Gypsies died by comparing Riefenstahl's lists of people appearing in the film with records from the Nazis.

There sure are other Hanna Reitschs in the world today. And why not? She's still a famous heroine in "democratic" Germany today, the subject of biographies and dick's approved role model. Her fellow Nazi, filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, is even more famous. Celebrated at film festivals in the u.s., the author of a best-selling lying autobiography, Riefenstahl is much sought after as a university lecturer in her comfy old age.

But definitely not celebrated was another grrl artist, Faye Lazebnik, back then a teenage Jewish photographer in Nazi-occupied Poland. After the fascists slaughtered eighteen hundred Jews from her village one day, including all her family, Faye escaped to become a guerrilla with the Jewish underground. From a base in the forests her unit fought the German army for years. Faye was a riflewoman and their memory, the maker of the photographic record of their armed resistance.

It's pretty obvious who contributed more to womankind as an artist, Leni Riefenstahl or Faye Lazebnik. One is famous among white women, the other completely unknown (i learned of Faye from a new documentary film, *Daring to Resist*, about Jewish women resistance fighters—soon not to be at your local theater). Ask yourself: What is the cause, what is the effect?

Los Angeles Times

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COLUMN ONE

On Guard Against a Flesh Trade

■ In Nepal, thousands of girls are kidnapped each year and sold into prostitution across Asia. Now, some who escaped are patrolling India's border to snare smugglers.

By DEKETER FILKINS
Times Staff Writer

BIRATNAGAR, Nepal—Of the thousands of Nepalese girls kidnapped to work in brothels across Asia, a brave few have returned to hunt their abductors.

Since as adolescents, the women now stand guard at checkpoints along the country's border with India to nab traffickers and rescue other girls about to be spirited out of Nepal.

Since 1997, when the women first took their posts, they have caught 59 suspected traffickers and saved 240 girls as they were being smuggled across the frontier. In a country where thousands of girls are kidnapped and sold into prostitution each year, the checkpoints' guards' efforts reflect a growing commitment to stopping the flow.

GUARDS: Nepalese Women Fight Back

Continued from A1
out and arrested. Others have counted traffickers and their payback across the border and into the hands of authorities.

At the chaotic Biratnagar crossing, Katalwal, now 18, stood recently in a bright green suit, assessing the faces of girls as they come through. Hours passed in the green-screened shelter before she stopped a girl seated in the back of a Nepalese rickshaw. Katalwal asked her a few questions, nodded and waved her through.

"I knew what to look for—it's in their eyes," she said. "These girls think they are going to work in India, but I have never seen one come back and say her life is better."

Nepalese police credit Katalwal with snaring four suspected traffickers and rescuing 15 girls since the beginning of the year.

"Usually, Sumra is right," said R.N. Shrestha, a police sub-inspector in Biratnagar.

The traffic in girls represents a national humiliation for Nepal, an impoverished country better known for its Himalayan peaks. Experts here say most of those abducted are smuggled out of the country to brothels in India, where they are forced for their fair skin and

ment. Most do not talk about their experiences, which are regarded as a stain on their traditional looms.

There, with the women's practices, Katalwal has upon her of posting guards at the border with the help of a grant from International Labor Organization to set up four guard posts on frontier with India. She quoted a handful of volunteers.

"All they want to go to the border," she said. "They are angry but don't know how to express their anger."

Katalwal stands less than 5 feet tall and is only a year or so past her teenage years.

She caught her first trafficker when she was 16, in a village near her home. Her father, a policeman, was a pious man who was a village headman.

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Debut for several days, Katalwal says, she usually gave in. She members living in a small room with no windows and no furnishings beyond a cooking fan, a bare lightbulb and a bed. Each man who visited her paid \$250 to \$325, depending on how long he stayed and what he wanted from her.

In a typical day, Katalwal recalls, she serviced 30 men, sometimes more. The brothel, a four-story building in Kathmandu's notorious Koushi district, housed 13 other Nepalese girls, most of whom, Katalwal guesses, were 14 or 15 years old.

"What could I do?" Katalwal asked, seated in the Malli Nepali house. "I had to have sex with many men. I was so sad."

"From the first day that I was in that place, my goal was to punish the people who did this to me. I never lost that faith."

She was a village headman. Her father, a policeman, was a pious man who was a village headman.

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gals, and they were convicted in a Nepalese court, where one got a three-year term and the other was sentenced to five years. After that, Katalwal decided to send Katalwal to the border.

Sumra is very small, but she is very brave," said Anjana Lama, another escapee who watches the border in Biratnagar.

As a surveillance along the border has been stepped up, the methods used to smuggle girls through have grown more sophisticated. Often, police say, smugglers cross first and instruct the girls to cross by themselves later.

One day last month, as she sat in her tin shed watching the border traffic, Katalwal spotted a man standing just shy of the border. He was trying to coax a reluctant girl across. Katalwal, suspicious because the girl looked as if she was from the countryside, alerted the police. They arrested the man and, after interrogating him and the girl, charged him with child smuggling.

The girl, 16-year-old Beena Bhujel, said the man was trying to persuade her to go to Calcutta—about 250 miles away. The train on the Indian side of the border was just ready to pull out. Bhujel

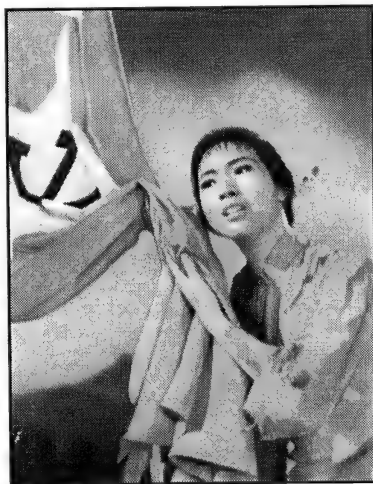
Listening to the news last week, i heard that even the u.s. State Department was now issuing "cover your ass" statements warning about the hundreds of thousands or millions of women and children sold into slavery each year in our shiny new 21st century. (Many, many more than were killed at the World Trade Center, that's for sure). While u.s. women are so indifferent and docile about this crime that even a white male journalist has written a column wondering why, Sushma Katalwal did it very personally. She's enraged. Because at age 14 she was lured across the border from Nepal and then sold for \$700 to an Indian pimp. Accidentally freed during a police raid after a year locked in one brothel room, she returned to join an organization of former slave prostitutes that one woman started. Most of them are HIV positive, without adequate medical care, but until they become too weak the women watch border posts to stop the slave traffickers. A newspaper article by a man has told us:

"BIRATNAGAR, Nepal—Of the thousands of Nepalese girls kidnapped to work in brothels across Asia, a brave few have returned to haunt their abductors.

“Seized as adolescents, the women now stand guard at checkpoints along the country’s border with India to nab traffickers and rescue other girls about to be spirited out of Nepal.

“Since 1997, when the women first took their posts, they have caught 70 suspected traffickers and saved 240 girls [this was written in 2000, more have been freed since] as they were being smuggled across the frontier. In a country where thousands of girls are kidnapped and sold into prostitution each year, the checkpoint guards reflect a growing commitment to stopping the illegal trade.”

This “growing commitment” isn’t shared by any of dick’s governments, of course, or by the women in the u.s. navy or the women in the c.i.a. or the woman head of this corporation or that or all the women kissing that famous “glass ceiling” or... the list just goes on. Cause and effect here is that no matter how successful you are as a girl in dick’s world, you have no power to fight for women. Actually, you have no *power* at all. Women in amerikkka keep confusing *privilege* with *power*. We have a lot of privilege on a world scale, maybe a high living standard as consumers, but no more power than women in Nepal or Afghanistan. Confused? We’re going to explain it all, piece by piece.

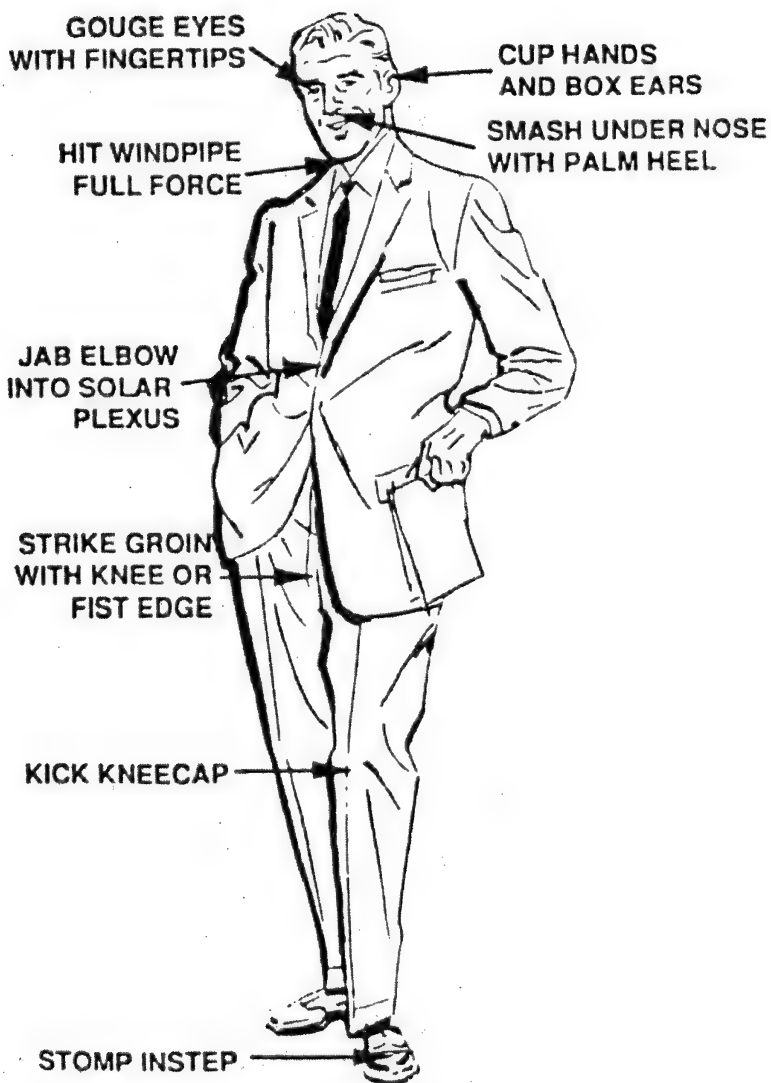


Italian poster for Navy auxiliary (1936),
and postcard from the Peking Opera (1969)

Sushma Katuwal, who is penniless, homeless and stricken with AIDS has more *power* than a woman u.s. army captain or corporate manager in Superpower America. Which is why only what Amazons do will determine our future. Let me repeat that, rudely—only what Amazons do will determine the future for *all* women.

This isn't really being fought out here in dick's amerikkka, yet. It's really being fought out by the world's majority in the Third World, the ex-colonial world of Asia, Afrika, Latin America, the Middle East and the ex-stalinist world of eastern europe. This is where our future is being made. Where we will win or lose as grrls for the last time.





which will you be Hammer or Anvil?

Women and children's war against the armed rule of men is the most taboo thing there is. *Yet it is coming.* It is so taboo, so threatening, that not only do generals and popes and even bankers shrink from it, but even feminists, socialists, anarchists and national liberation movements try to suppress any thought of it. Still, it must come. Women's political violence is thought unnatural, a violation of the most basic sex roles, contrary to the social customs of ages, almost unthinkable. Still, it is something that is necessary, natural and inevitable.

To dick it will seem incomprehensible, as though his table, his chair, his tv, his bed all started attacking him. Because the ownership of white settler women by settler men has gone on so long, this property relationship seems only normal to him. While he acknowledges that other nations and colonies will rise up and seize territory and the right to self-determination, will kill him, settler men see their antagonisms with white women as easily handled. A personal thing. Dealt with by a fist or a divorce or getting a replacement part. Because dick sees other nations and colonies as dangerous groups, but us as a pacified individual "piece." And for the past 300 years so have we.



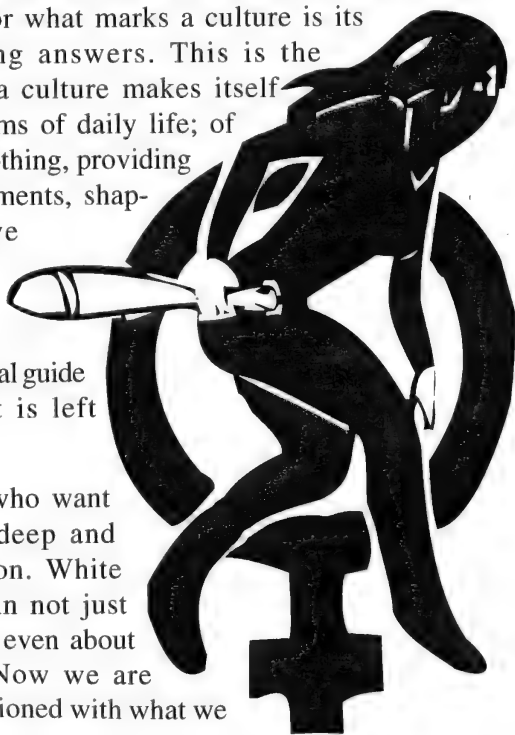
He Asked Me To Eat Him

In the substratum beneath all of world history lies a conflict between two parent civilizations. One represents in unbroken continuity many centuries of domination. It is in its nature patriarchal, class-ridden and property-driven, an oppressors' and conquerors' civilization. In its latest & greatest manifestation we know this civilization as patriarchal imperialism.

The other is a shadow civilization. As old as the oppressor civilization is, having evolved over many centuries thru different forms of class society, the shadow civilization is older still. It is the primal society, the first culture of humankind. In opposition to the oppressor civilization it is women-centered, communal, non-owning. Broken by the rise of class-ridden society, the shadow civilization lives on as a fugitive among the oppressed. It represents our own past & our own future, however fragmentary, blurred-over and unconscious it is.

The conflict between the oppressor culture and revolutionary women's culture can also be seen as two different ways to answer problems, for what marks a culture is its own way of finding answers. This is the intersection where a culture makes itself evident in the rhythms of daily life; of producing food & clothing, providing shelter from the elements, shaping how we solve our myriad life problems. A culture is both a problem-solving tool & a survival guide for a people. Or it is left behind.

Among women who want change there is a deep and underlying confusion. White women are uncertain not just about strategies, but even about what the goal is. Now we are confused and disillusioned with what we set out to do.



Well, there's nothing wrong with our disillusionment. "*Disillusion*," my dictionary says, is "*to free from that which deludes or is illusory.*" So what's wrong with that?

The first question isn't what we should do, it's who are we and where do we come from? For our confusion comes from not knowing who we are.

We have an unspoken fear, a fear that we have no culture of our own, no culture that can defeat patriarchal violence. That whatever we had before patriarchy came was erased so long ago, was so primitive, that it has no practical meaning anymore. That the only really modern way of life is the culture that white men made, patriarchal imperialism, with its command of science and industry.

"Why is capitalism so superior?" we ask ourselves, when we see even former Third World revolutionary nations humbly turning to imitate the West. Is our only destiny to live out white men's culture, playing roles in their rules, seeking an ecological niche in their nations & corporations?

Our unspoken fear that women have no culture resonates below words through everything white women do, no matter how much so-called feminists try to pretend otherwise.



They mean business

With four women's prisons on line and a fifth near completion, Florida organized this all-female "confrontation squad" to deal with disturbances. Females account for 10 percent of the

prison population in Florida—a statistic that has doubled in the last three years, officials said. The squad is shown during drills at River Junction Correctional Center at Chattahoochee.

The question of why patriarchal imperialism is so successful as a civilization has its polar opposite question: where does a revolutionary women's culture begin?

We need to know that these two questions are interrelated. Patriarchal imperialism is the only so-called civilization that has always used genocide as its primary fuel, its primary harvester. It ain't hard to spread the goodies on the banquet table and invite friends to dinner when you steal and kill the producers. And revolutionary women's culture begins when we leave the table.

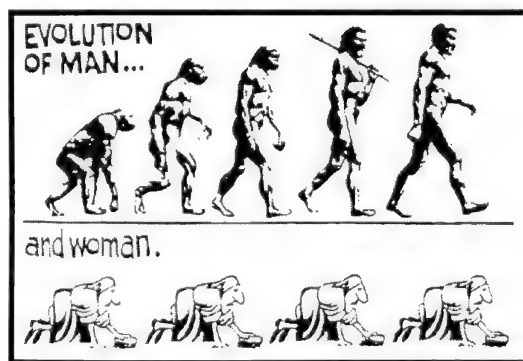
This is a crucial time because a social restructuring of a profound kind has just happened. For the present cannot hold. This restructuring will determine the ground that the *next* generation fights on. Right now white women are becoming increasingly patriarchal. There is a vigorous competing and sweating by white women to get in with the patriarchy or as close as possible. The women's movement is pale and timid by comparison.

And now we must know who we are.



We have a certain story that we tell, which we say is the story of how all women were enslaved & how patriarchal domination arose. In the past thirty years hundreds & perhaps thousands of like-minded articles & books have been written by white women outlining the fall of womankind, which our white amerikkkan women's studies departments say took place 3,000 to 5,000 years ago. It was so long ago that we can't remember it & no one we know is responsible for it. This is a typical example, as written way back in 1971 by Charlotte Bunch and Rita Mae Brown:

"The first division of labor in pre-history, was based on sex; men hunted, women built the villages, took care of children, and farmed... men conquered women with the weapons that they developed for hunting... Although there have been numerous battles over class, race and nation during the past 3,000 years, none of them has brought the liberation of women."



This story, while it has truths within it, is as a whole untrue. It slides into a pre-conceived world view that amerikkka has put into our heads. It's very understandable that in the early days of the women's movement this stick figure sketch of how women were enslaved was a radical beginning, because it helped us see how patriarchy was born in systematic violence against women. But now, thirty years later, we should have developed a more scientific picture.

We haven't because amerikkkan women still believe that men's ownership of women is something near eternal, begun before history even, something associated with dark and primitive societies, and

that only in our lifetimes are educated women in “developed” (i.e. white) countries beginning to get equality. And don’t we believe that amerikkkan white women are the most independent, the most feminist of all? White men say that to us all the time, so we think it must be true. But it’s us who are backward, who are dependent.

i see it as a measurement of how wiped blank we are by genocide that we can recite racist anti-woman lies that dick has taught us—and think it’s our *own* feminist theory.

Women accept amerikkka as a large & wealthy nation, successful, the most highly “developed” on earth. And we think without thinking that this white life is what’s normal, natural, the standard other peoples must try to reach and become.

i say none of this is true in the bones. This most unnatural of nations is large only in stolen lands (which Third World peoples are insidiously reclaiming, smudging and redrawing borders), is rich only in stolen labor & stolen lives, amerikkka is really an artificial nation, an empire that makes its living by looting and destroying other nations and peoples in ceaseless cycles of genocide.

amerikkka is driven to do genocide every day, because if it ever stops killing their whole top-heavy Babylon would come crashing down. Bob Marley & the Wailers only sang what’s truth:

*“Babylon system is the vampire, yeah
Sucking the children, day by day.”*



Genocide is itself a basic economic activity, it's what lies behind commodity production under the capitalist system. Genocide, i say, begins with the global wiping out of women's society and women's economy, and the resulting slave labor of hundreds of millions of women and children.

euro-capitalism first arose through the era of the Witchhunt—the institutionalized terror against women in Western Europe that lasted over 500 years, from the 12th through the 17th centuries. Women accused of being witches were arrested and tortured by the authorities until they confessed to being agents of satan.

Of course, not confessing was also taken as a sure sign of guilt, since the priests proclaimed that only satan's magic would keep a woman from confessing while her bones were being crushed. Only made sense to them. Us “witches” were then burned alive at the stake.

The total number of women imprisoned, tortured and/or killed by the Witchhunt was in the millions. One German prosecutor alone, Benedict Carpzov of Saxony, signed 20,000 death sentences of accused women in his career. In the patriarchy's history books all this is trivialized as a bit of religious hysteria or merely a colorful case of how ignorant people were back then.



What is real is that the Witchhunt was a social institution, in which the killing of women was tied to the birth of euro-capitalism. This is where our amerikkka began, in the first "Right to Life" movement.

Women were attacked in so violent a way not because of feudal backwardness, but because of the needs of the new capitalism gradually being born within the old European society. The patriarchy's Witchhunt was in the first place directly economic, a means of unwaged capital accumulation. Special bodies of armed men seized women's property to help finance the growth of nation-states.

There were many independent women in feudal society. Craftswomen weaving silk and other fine textiles, small street merchants selling produce and handicrafts, women farmers. In some cities women had their own guilds (early form of unions) of artisans. Endless royal wars over land and trade routes had left numerous widows with small houses, perhaps a shop or other property. And peasant families, unable to feed all their children, sent their girl-children away to the cities to find their own livelihoods as artisans, prostitutes or peddlers.

It was independent women who were the main targets of the Witchhunt. When Catherine Hernot, postmistress of the German city of Cologne, was burned at the stake as a witch, it was because a powerful family wanted a monopoly on the lucrative postal business. Unmarried women, who were not owned by a man, were a majority of those burned as witches, with widows being 40-50% of the victims.

In the Witchhunt all the property of arrested women belonged to the State, with the court system taking part of the loot as fees to the male lawyers, bailiffs and soldiers. But the lion's share of this wealth minted from slaughtering women went to the State treasuries. It paid for the armies of men who produced nothing useful, for highways to carry trade, for expeditions to "discover" other societies that we now call the Third World—in short, the pre-conditions for capitalism to grow.

In unwaged capital accumulation from the looting of outlawed and marginalized people, Europe was learning the methods that it would use in colonialism. Women were euro-capitalism's very first colony, the "inner colony" as European radical feminists have termed it.

The Witchhunt was also kin to the anti-semitic pogroms against the Jews. They, too, were said to be servants of satan and the "Christ killers" themselves. In fact, until the 16th century the authorities called illegal women's meetings "synagogues" to associate them in the public eye with the Jewish pariahs. Then such meetings were called a "Witches Sabbath" (now they're called "terrorist conspiracies").

About the only thing most of us remember from grammar school is "1492," which was drummed into our heads as the wonderful year that Columbo "discovered" the Western hemisphere. But in Spain, 1492 is better known as the year that the Spanish nation-state entered the modern age by simultaneously ousting the Moors (Afrikans) and financing itself by expropriating all Jewish property. Oh, and all the Jewish women and men who didn't convert to the pope were killed or driven out of Spain.



It wasn't superstition, then, but cold, cold business that led one German official, bailiff Geiss of Lindheim, to write his lord for permission to kill a new batch of women:

"If only your Lordship would be willing to start the burning, we would gladly provide the firewood and bear all other costs, and your Lordships would earn so much that the bridge and also the Church could be well repaired.

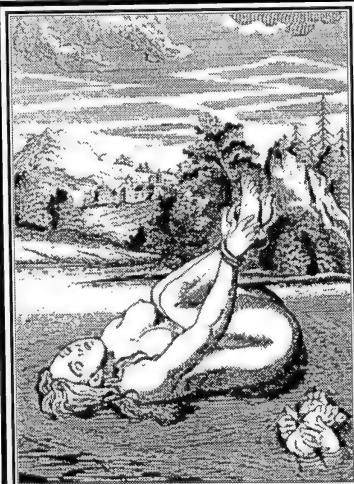
"Moreover, you would get so much that you could pay your servants a better salary in the future, because one could confiscate whole houses and particularly the more well-to-do ones."

It wasn't just that cash, however. No, they had to do it. The Witchhunt was real to them because there were "witches" they had to hunt down—radical women and women seeking knowledge forbidden to us.

You gotta keep in mind that religion was the main medium of ideology in feudal Europe. That everything was explained, or justified by religion. It was all "God's Will" this and "Divine Revelation" that. Political and social issues were dressed in religious drag. Like those "Crusades to free the Holy Land," which were just 'bout invading and looting the Arab world.

When the rulers said "Satan" they really meant communism or communalism. When they hunted "witches" they meant hunting down women who might be out of control.

Just as those lords and merchants and cardinals needed armies to put down the peasant revolts that broke out, so they needed the Witchhunt to search out and destroy women's resistance. Young Joan of Arc had to be burned alive because she was a bad example. i mean, looking like a dyke and winning all those battles, too. During the Middle Ages there were lots of radical women, probably many more than there are today among white women in amerikkka (did you just assume it was the other way around?)



Eigentliche Abbildung der ehemaligen
Probe und Reinigung der Hexen
auf dem kalten Wasser.

Most (perhaps 85 percent) of the victims of death by torture were women.

In the "water torture" the victim was usually shackled hands and feet together as in the illustration. She was then thrown into a river. If she sank, and died she was innocent. If the water rejected her, this was a proof of her guilt. Alan C. Kors and Edward Peters *Witchcraft in Europe, 1100-1700* (Philadelphia 1972).

The need for an elaborate institution to loot and slaughter millions of women grew out of material changes in the feudal mode of production and distribution. Beginning in the 12th century, the growth of a pre-industrial capitalist activity began to transform feudal Europe from within. The merchant and money-lender class swelled on the trade in spices, dyes, silk and other new luxury goods from other continents. Shipping fleets, large navies, ports, shipyards, and other new industry all appeared.

On that economic basis modern nation-states began to emerge, uniting by sword and cannon the crazy-quilt of little patriarchal domains—duchies and church estates and principalities—that Europe had inherited from its white tribal past.



Peasants were being pushed off the land to make way for the capitalist agriculture of commercial wool and livestock production. Because of that, as early as the 16th century Northern Europe (Britain, France, Holland) was no longer self-sufficient in food, but had to import wheat and other grains from Eastern Europe.

More people became “free” wage workers, which is a capitalist relationship, rather than tilling the land in hereditary service for their feudal overlord. Cities kept growing in size. Not only from commerce and the many workshops of skilled artisans (weavers, spinners, cabinet-makers, goldsmiths, dressmakers and shipwrights) but from the new phenomenon of dispossessed poor that capitalism had introduced.

Class divisions had become wider as feudalism matured. The vagabonds, who were wandering masses of homeless kids, women and men ousted from the land by their former lords, swelled the labor market.

Wages by the 15th century began to go down, not year by year, but generation after generation. Meanwhile, the ruling triumvirate of the noble courts, the church hierarchy, and the rising merchant class competed with each other in a lavish lifestyle not seen by Europeans since the days of imperial Rome a thousand years before.

Rebellion against the corruption took many forms. One that involved many thousands of women was the movement of voluntary poverty. That was a social and political struggle in religious form.

Beginning in the 13th century women called Beguines appeared, living communally in groups of women's houses and wearing hooded robes of grey or black. They supported themselves by handicrafts or begging (from the Beguines and their male counterparts, the Beghards, come our present words "beggar" and "begging"). Some wandered from town to town as vagabonds, preaching a kind of liberation theology to other women.

Voluntary poverty was not a renunciation of the world to Beguines as it was to many medieval nuns, but a means to revolutionize the world for women escaping the patriarchal family. Beguines said that the acquiring of material wealth was an absolute evil. Owning any individual property, even jewelry or numerous changes of clothing, was considered wrong.



Beguines didn't marry. In fact, many of them upheld the right of people to freely have sexual relations without sin. That was a radical idea for women in that age. As was their insistence on women educating themselves and writing. Those women were not just critics of the feudal order, but were trying to organize women and men into an alternate culture against the encroaching capitalism. As part of the heretical socio-religious "movement of the Free Spirit," they said that no one who was in the upper classes was without sin, while the oppressed classes were the sole bearers of righteousness. A religious historian writes that this alternative culture was a thorn in the side of the authorities:

"The voluntary poor formed a mobile, restless intelligentsia, members of which were constantly traveling along the trade routes from town to town, operating mostly underground and finding an audience and a following amongst all the disoriented and anxious elements in urban society. They saw themselves as the only true imitators of the Apostles and indeed of Christ...

"From the second half of the twelfth century onwards these multitudes of itinerant 'holy beggars' of both sexes showed themselves ready to assimilate any and every heretical doctrine that there was."

Beguines numbered in the hundreds of thousands, primarily in France, Belgium and Germany. In the German city of Cologne alone there were 2,000 Beguines by the 13th century. They came to this culture of voluntary communalism and poverty from every class, craftswomen and widows of merchants, urban workers and former peasants.

In some medieval cities a certain neighborhood would become the women's quarter, with most houses occupied by Beguines and other independent women. One historian estimated that the Beguine community in the city of Strasbourg, France, was at least 10% of the total population.

Beguines were a non-hierarchical people, with each house making its own rules, electing its own leaders, and deciding its own finances. Many Beguine houses were led by peasant or working class women, in contrast to Europe's growing class barriers. The Beguine women's communities were really the only democracy anywhere in Europe. Some married women sent their daughters to be educated among the Beguines, while Beguine houses also took care of elderly Beguines in their last years. It was a way of life, a fragment of what we don't know that we lost.

While the Roamin' Catholic Church tried to co-opt the Beguines, by 1259 they began to be excommunicated. For a priest or monk to enter a Beguine commune, or speak to a Beguine on the street without a Church witness, was grounds for his own expulsion from the Church.

"An east German bishop complained that these women were idle gossiping vagabonds who refused obedience to men under the pretext that God was best served in freedom."

Women street orators, writers and theologians, conceded by even their Catholic accusers to be brilliant and unorthodox, were produced by the Beguine communities.



That was more trouble for their ruling classes than it would seem to us in amerikkka. 'Cause all that religious b.s. was the philosophical guide for medieval social relations, for how folks were supposed to behave (like in Iran or white South African society today). Religious b.s. was the legal code of the courts. And the whole bag was an official monopoly of the church. All the writings were even kept in the dead language of Latin, readable only by the elite. To simply interpret the bible into common language, something first done by penniless Beguine scholar-outlaws, was to risk being burned at the stake for her-esy (as many were).

The Church had been put on the defensive by the growth of this women's communality, which was the mass base for the radical movement of voluntary poverty. Remember that the Church was itself a ruling class institution, with its own soldiers and plantations. Many bishops and priests lived the kind of decadent patriarchal lifestyle that television evangelists are famous for. Even nuns were usually from the upper classes, since they had to put up a large cash dowry to be "married to Christ" and live in the nunnery.

A counterattack used not only the Inquisition, the torture chamber and the stake (the separate but parallel "Beguin" movement in Spain was wiped out by 1330 A.D.), but co-optation. Rome had already approved the founding of begging orders, such as the Franciscans, who wore coarse robes and lived simple lives as Beguines did, but who were loyal to the ruling classes.

The Church gave protection to those Beguine houses that put themselves under the supervision of the Dominican friars, as lay associates. All others were outlawed. Beguines became co-opted, permitted to live by themselves without men so long as they avoided illegal activity or her-esy.

While the Beguines still contained a radical underground, hidden behind the cover of submission to the Church, they gradually died out. Not only because they became a privileged group of women separated from the masses of women, but because patriarchal capitalism took away their economic base of independent women's production of textiles.



So the Witchhunt was an institutionalized terrorism of women. Not only to extract *unwaged* capital accumulation to build euro-capitalism from our slaughter, but to compel our political conformity.

No, not to compel our allegiance to this ruler or that, or to this government or that, for those were men's decisions. But to compel our submission to the nation-state's ownership of our bodies, and our conformity to euro-capitalism's rules for women. That is why millions of us were arrested and tortured and killed.

The Witchhunt was aimed at all women in Europe, was meant to be felt by each one, with the intent of wiping them blank by generations of terrorism. The authorities, however superstitious and sadistic they were as men, knew that the larger issue was the elimination of women as a people.

In 1486, two monk-torturers of the Dominican order wrote the book *Malleus Maleficarum* (or "the hammer of witches"), the Catholic Church's basic text on witchcraft. *Malleus Maleficarum* explained why satan's servants were mostly women: We are by our basic nature as cunts inclined to evil, and are weaker in loyalty to God the Stepfather ("He steps on you. He steps on me... yah, yah, yah"). The very word "femina" they wrote, can be broken down into the Latin "fe" and "mina," or "less faith."

A big part of that burnable flaw in us, the two Fathers continued, is that women are more sexual and lustful, which leads us straight to you-know-who. They concluded in deep-down satisfaction: "Blessed be the Most High who has preserved the male sex from so great a crime."

amerikkka's so-called "Right-to-Life" movement has its ideological forerunner in the mass burnings of women healers and midwives, who were a major target of the Witchhunt. Being suspected of helping in abortions was an automatic death sentence for a woman. In fact, any woman who seemed knowledgeable about the traditional peasant women's medicine or who refused to marry was a suspect.

Now we can see why women's sexuality was so dangerous. For women's bodies were not ours but were property. Not primarily now of individual men, but property of the competing nation-states, which commanded women's bodies to reproduce ever larger numbers of new workers and soldiers.

Jean Bodin was at one and the same time a leading French mercantile economist and a government consultant on torturing and executing "witches." In his euro-capitalist mind these were one unified concern. For the French nation-state to prosper, Bodin



"For it is recommended in crimes so conspiratorial that presumption and conjecture are sufficient proofs."

—Jean Bodin, famous French lawyer, philosopher, economist and demonologist

said, the new economy needed a more abundant supply of workers. Remember the de-population common from plagues and wars. It was women who used contraceptive methods and caused abortions who betrayed the new national economy, he said. In Bodin's doctrine all such women must first be tortured to learn their accomplices, and then executed as "witches".

While early feudal society, like Rome and Greece before it, saw women as lesser beings and the rightful property of one man or another, the emerging euro-capitalist order categorized women first as a natural resource of the nation-state. Biological factories like forests of timber and herds of meat. And this was as capitalist development itself was causing chaos, forcing migration and abandonment of the old ways, and as more women were rebelling. The Witchhunt was meant to destroy women as a people, so that the capitalist nation-state could rise up.

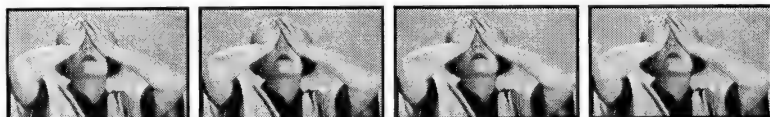


White women still take all this with a grain of salt, as the saying goes. These are merely tales of the bad old past, which can be safely appreciated as comforting proof that "*You've come a long way, baby!*" 'Cause it's so different for us now. In one generation we got women astronauts and women execs, women mayors and women paratroopers.

What's it mean, then, to talk about the Witchhunt and genocide against women? White feminists today like to identify with the "witches." That's what i mean, we don't know who we are. *We aren't the "witches."* We are the ones on the other side: the loyal sisters and wives of the euro-men doing the policing and burning. The sisters of patriarchy trying to protect themselves from the terrorism by submitting, trying to be the unthreatening helpers.

We were taught to join dick in doing genocide, lest we, too, be his victims. After generations of conditioning and bribing, we follow dick's rules as a reflex, without even noticing.

One big rule is cover up genocide: never see it, never admit it.



We have to go back for a moment, back before patriarchal euro-capitalism reformed the world in its own image. White women don't understand who we are because we've blocked understanding the specific civilization that we belong to. We have to go back to that contact between semi-feudal Europe, with its wooden sailing ships and musket-bearing soldiers, and the rest of the world. That meeting was not like we think it was.

The impact of expanding Europe on what is now called the Third World was supposedly a collision of advanced whites and undeveloped colored people, of euro-capitalism's superior science and economic power overwhelming primitive tribes. But in 1492, when Christopher Columbus' expedition ran into the Caribbean islands, Europe was not advanced over the nations of Asia, Afrika, the Middle East and the Western Hemisphere. It's technology and economy were different, but not advanced or superior. It's that difference that we gotta focus on.

In many respects, euro-civilization was both technologically and economically backward. Europe was known as a poor barbarian region isolated on the periphery of the trade routes between the world's main civilizations. The level of development of the world-spanning Islamic trading civilization of the Turkish Ottoman empire, the Han empire of China, the Moghul empire of India, the many Afrikan nations and indigenous nations of the Western Hemisphere easily surpassed backward Europe. This is to say that Europe was not the center of knowledge and progress.

Most Europeans had no idea of what sanitation was. The English, for example, seldom washed (their medicine-men said that bathing was unhealthy). Euro-men were backward compared to the rest of the world in the applied sciences/technologies such as medicine, textiles, nutrition, metal-working and agriculture, had an elaborate system of S-M patriarchal superstitions which were enforced by a parasite caste of men who tortured and murdered women, and had the lowest standard of living of any major region on the face of the earth. i mean, this was a poor civilization. What we did have (or what had us) were the beginnings of euro-capitalism.

i know this is hard to believe, because everyone just "knows" that for whatever reasons, modern science and industry first came into being in Europe and settler amerikkka. Let's fast forward from the start of the Witchhunt to check this out, say a century and a half after Columbus hit the Lotto, to colonial settler amerikkka of the mid-1600s.

There are British-trained physicians, men representing the most advanced medical science that euro-capitalism had. But they don't seem to be able to do anything about smallpox, the most feared contagious disease of the times. Not only did smallpox, a viral infection, exterminate whole Indian communities, but it continued to kill and disfigure thousands of white settlers.

White people did notice, though, that many of their Afrikan slaves didn't get smallpox even in the midst of epidemics. This was puzzling to the white doctors. It was accounted for by the supposed "beast-like" nature of the Afrikan race, which was thereby less vulnerable to the human diseases that afflicted the higher and more sensitive white race. En-slaved women merely nodded and said nothing.

Of course, the reason that some Afrikan slaves didn't catch smallpox was that they had been immunized as children in Afrika, or had been secretly immunized in the slave quarters. For in the region of West Afrika that many slaves came from, smallpox was known and a crude inoculation against it was already used (using pinpricks to transfer some clear serum from a smallpox sore to the body of an uninfected person; what resulted was a milder infection producing the antibodies that gave lifelong immunity to the disease, although some still died from the crude inoculation). All slaves who knew were sworn not to tell Europeans.

So who was backward and who had the advanced medical technology? Just because they were captives, laborers kept in rags, didn't mean that Afrikans had no science. Even though their science had to be practiced as a conspiracy.

Afrikan slaves here were party to scientific knowledge that was shared by most of the world: with the Han empire in China, with Arab civilization, with Greece and Turkey, with the physicians of the Moghul empire in India (who are thought to have used smallpox inoculation since 1000 A.D.) Except in areas where the disease was rare, such as in the Western Hemisphere, the major civilizations of the world knew—but not backward Europe or settler amerikkka.

Afrikan slaves had been secretly using smallpox inoculation for almost a century before euro-amerikkkans found out how to do it. And again, it wasn't any white male physician with his degrees and bank accounts who learned how. **It was a woman to woman transfer of science.** British feminist Mary Wortley Montagu learned about inoculation from Turkish women (she was married to the British ambassador to the Ottoman empire, though for her it was only an escape from an arranged marriage). In 1717 she wrote her friend, "Mrs. S.C.":

"I am going to tell you a thing that will make you wish yourself here. The smallpox, so fatal and so general amongst us, is here entirely harmless by the invention of ingrafting, which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women who make it their business to perform the operation every autumn, in the month of September, when the great heat is abated..."

In that same year Mary Montagu demonstrated smallpox inoculation on her son, and by 1721 it was being tried, with great controversy, by the medical patriarchs of England. There was much fear and superstition about this vaccine among white society, ordinary as it was to the rest of the world.



Mary Wortley Montagu

Public fears about smallpox inoculation reached the point of hysteria in the amerikkkan colonies. amerikkka is always in a state of hysteria. There was even white mob violence by settler men. Even though the campaign for smallpox inoculation was led by Cotton Mather, the greatest of the New England Puritan ministers and the man who had earlier led the campaign to root out the hidden nests of “witches” among white women.

Mather himself was attacked, and his home firebombed, during the inoculation controversy of 1721. Mather stuck to his guns because his Afrikan slave, “Onesimus,” had advised him that all the slaves knew that inoculation did work, and that he, “Onesimus,” had been inoculated himself as a child in West Afrika.

The science of what is now called the Third World was still leading and teaching the backward European civilization.

Now, let’s fast-forward three centuries after Columbus. The euro-capitalist empire in north amerikkka is breaking away from Great Britain, becoming a new world power. DR. BENJAMIN RUSH of Philadelphia was the foremost u.s. physician. Educated at Princeton & Edinburgh University in Scotland, Rush became a successful surgeon, teacher of chemistry, researcher, patriot, and a professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He personally trained 3,000 white men as M.D.s (isn’t that a war crime of some kind?), and is best-known today as the founder of u.s. medical science. The patriarchy has named hospitals and medical schools in his honor.

Benjamin Rush was also one of the founders not only of the u.s.a. as a nation, but of white liberalism. He was a signer of the u.s. declaration of independence, and served as the surgeon-general in his friend George Washington's army. It was Rush who found a talented new immigrant, Thomas Paine, and persuaded him to write a pamphlet for the rebel settlers attacking royalty. Rush edited the pamphlet, the famous *Common Sense*, and arranged its publication.

As a liberal, Dr. Rush advocated teaching women how to read. He was one of the supporters of the first Afrikan Free Church. Rush went so far as to argue that slavery should be abolished. Afrikans, he said, were fully as human as white people.

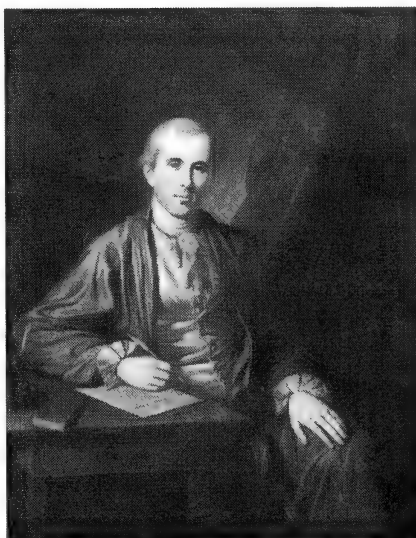
In fact, Dr. Rush developed the theory that Afrikans *were* white people. There was no such thing as Afrikan peoples or civilization, he said. Rush had "discovered" that Afrikans were only white people whose distant ancestors had wandered too far south into the unhealthy Afrikan tropics. There, these lost European tribes had all become infected with a virulent type of hereditary leprosy, which gave them their "diseased" look of dark skin, "big lip," "flat nose," and "woolly hair."

Until euro-capitalist science discovered how to cure their poor, diseased Afrikan relatives, Dr. Rush sadly concluded that Afrikans would have to stay segregated as a public health measure. And at all costs, he warned, white women must be prevented from having sexual relations with slaves, since he had also "discovered" that those white women who did so became infected themselves, and grew thicker lips and darker skins! This was the blastoff of u.s. patriarchal medical science.

He told a special meeting of the American Philosophical Society on July 14, 1792:

"A white woman in North Carolina not only acquired a dark color, but several of the features of a negro, by marrying and living with a black husband. A similar instance of a change in the color and features of a woman in Buck's county in Pennsylvania has been observed and from a similar cause."

While Dr. Rush was experimenting with “medical” cures, such as using strong lye to repeatedly bleach a slave man’s skin, the only sure remedy he said he knew of was hard labor. Pointing out that Afrikan skin color was lightest on the hands and feet. Rush said that was proof that the “pressure” of physical labor had worn or squeezed the darkness out. So for humanitarian reasons, he urged his fellow slaveowners to keep



Benjamin Rush, racist quack

Afrikans at hard labor, long as possible, to help them over their unfortunate condition. What heart, what a real man!

That white women who got down with Afrikans would lose their previous whiteness and become “diseased” Afrikans themselves, was a telling fantasy. Oppressor nightmares offered up as biological fact, as science. More telling was that Dr. Rush never thought to question if white slavemasters who raped Afrikan women might suffer from this fantasy infection also.

Don’t trivialize this as old history. For this kind of theory is more widely believed by white men in 1989 than it was in 1750... Because it doesn’t come from men’s ignorance, but from the world-view of a genocide civilization. Similar scientific theory was cooked up by the German Nazis after all, who were no strangers to modern technology. In 1935 Julius Streicher, Nazi party boss in Nuremberg & their chief propagandist against Jews, said:

“For those in the know, these are the established facts; One, the seed of a man of another race is a ‘foreign protein.’ During copulation, the seed is, in part or in whole, absorbed by the fertile mother-soil and thus passes into the blood. A single act of intercourse between a Jew and an Aryan woman is sufficient to pollute her forever.”

Am i saying that there's an ideological similarity between the Founding Fathers of u.s. science and the Founding Fathers of the Third Reich? That's the facts. Don't most white men in the u.s. today believe that if a white woman has sex with Afrikans she is "soiled" or even "diseased"? If Dr. Rush could be dug up and dusted off tomorrow, his ideas would still be perfectly in tune with amerikkkan culture. Only if he came back now he'd be a professor of ob-gyn.

While Benjamin Rush entertained the settler elite with his colonialist-sexist theories, he and his white medical colleagues couldn't cure a damn thing. Outside of crude, non-sterile, chop-it-off surgery, white "sawbones" knew nothing at all about healing. Rush's favorite treatment for disease was blood-letting, the classic European remedy used for over a thousand years with no success.

When an epidemic of Yellow Fever struck Philadelphia, settlers hurried to flee the city and scatter to the countryside, where the

chances of contagion were less. Dr. Rush publicly urged people to stay, promising them certain cure through his three-times-a-day blood-letting treatments.

By cutting open the veins and drawing a pan of blood three times a day. Rush believed that the disease would be "weakened." Yellow Fever need not be feared, he told the press; greeting his patients with the line, "Don't be afraid, there is nothing wrong with you but the Yellow Fever."

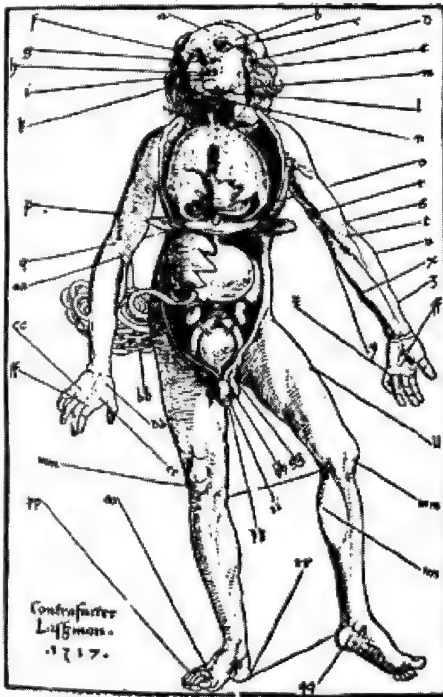


illustration shows points
used for bloodletting

The scandal over the hundreds of deaths, at last forced the shaken Rush out of medicine. His friends in the patriarchy took care of him, of course. President Adams gave him a patronage job as treasurer of the u.s. mint. This is the man that the patriarchy names medical schools after, and honors as the Founding Father of u.s. medicine. It all fits, doesn't it?

We've detoured through this story to get beyond the euro-capitalist reflexes drilled into us as our culture, to strip it away and see our civilization with fresh eyes. "Doctor" Benjamin Rush "M.D." was all patriarchal trappings, liberalism and all, but there wasn't anything inside. Like those TV doctors who sell us stuff on the commercials ("I'm not a doctor, but I play one on television").

Three centuries after Columbus, euro-capitalism had managed to create a highly patriarchal, institutionalized and profitable medical profession which had no "medical." Dr. Rush and his colleagues were backward by the world standards of the time. In Afrika or in Tibet, women woulda handed him a hoe and told him to find another way to support himself.

There's a barbed point inside all this.

When we strip away the mystique of euro-capitalist technology, we find that it runs on genocide. And it had its origins in conquest, not in the thrown-out musings of Greek philosophers. euro-capitalism didn't colonize the world because of its superior sciences and industry. That proposition has things upside down. Only from its ever-expanding conquests and genocide of other peoples and nations, did euro-capitalist civilization slowly gain the scientific and economic superiority that we now assume is only right and natural.

Everything that we have (or that has us), from birth control pills to this nation itself, comes from doing genocide, and in particular from doing genocide against other women.

The concept of a world economy came from the Islamic mercantile-capitalist civilization, which for the first time brought much of the world into one trading system. At Great Zimbabwe, the capital of the Rozwi federation in Afrika during the 1500s, people ate from fine Chinese porcelain and the guards carried German firearms (crude muskets). All over three centuries before they ever

saw a white man. This was possible because Great Zimbabwe was tied into the world-expanding trading system.

Even the second of those capitalist systems, that developing within the belly of the Moghul empire in India, was in advance of Europe in many ways. Contrary to its own propaganda, the white men of Europe were not so successful economically compared to what is now called the Third World.

Expanding Moghul industry threatened European trade, not only in Asia but all the way around the world in Europe itself. England had to erect higher and higher tariff walls to protect its own textile industry from superior Indian products, finally banning their importation altogether in 1701. British merchants still had to buy Moghul goods, not only cloth but superior Indian high-strength steel, for without them they would have lost customers in other countries.

Most of what Europe produced then was inferior or inappropriate in the eyes of other civilizations, so the main British export to Asia was money. Having little that Asians wanted, British capitalism had to ship tons of silver each year to purchase Asian cotton, silk, coffee, tea, steel, dyes, teak, medicines and other goods in one-sided trade. Sixty-five percent of British cargo sent to Asia between 1730 and 1750 was monetary silver alone. This smoked the British lords of commerce.

Under the mythic rules of "free enterprise," in "fair trade," white people were not the winners. The British empire's countermove was to send its warships and soldiers to gain what its economy could not.

As Sir Josiah Child, director of the East India Company, said during Britain's first, unsuccessful war with the Moghul empire in 1688:

"The subjects of the Moghul cannot bear a war with the English for twelve months together, without starving and dying by the thousands for want of work to purchase rice; not singly for want of our trade, but because of our war, we obstruct their trade with all the Eastern nations which is ten times as much as ours and all the European nations put together."

Hijacking and international terrorism were invented by euro-capitalism. It was their No. 1 Big Business. Bigger than steel, bigger than farming, it paid for industrializing Europe by de-industrializing and looting the rest of the world.

Europe's advantage was not technological but social, cultural. Military hardware was not the decisive factor. Older empires, such as Han China, could easily have matched these weapons. After all, Europe first learned of cannons, gunpowder, steel, printing and the mathematics needed for navigation at sea, from China, North Afrika and the Arab world. Indian Moghul cannon in the 17th century was as good as English cannon.

No, euro-capitalism's true advantage was in its social system, whose life was ceaseless capital accumulation through higher and higher levels of social violence, to which technology was driven as a mere servant by its master.

After the British East India Company and its army defeated the Moghul empire at the Battle of Plassey in 1757, occupying Bengal, the British simply looted everything they could use from the region. Precious metals, textiles, all manufactured goods, rice and other crops and finally the land itself. Western history calls this the Rape of Bengal, in which British capitalism killed eight million Indians by famine, having looted the economy, taken the food, and ransomed the farmland back to the Indian peasants for exorbitant rents.

The British government's Select Committee reported in 1783:

"When account is taken of the intercourse, for it is not commerce, which is carried on between Bengal and England, the pernicious effects of the system... will appear in the strongest point of view. In that view, the whole exported produce of the country, so far as the Company is concerned, is not exchanged in the course of barter, but it is taken away without any return or payment whatever."*

* We see that the most violent crimes of colonialism are like "intercourse" between men and women.



Instead of tons of silver shipped to Asia each year before 1757, the British now took the wealth of India without sending even a single silver coin. Their trade with the rest of Asia was paid for by what was taken from the people of Bengal. What could be more profitable than that?

It was an inevitable by-product of the looting that one-third of the population of Bengal disappeared. And India was but one colony in the new economy of genocide that powered-up euro-capitalism.

Although the white male Left is voluntarily enthralled by the fiction that euro-industrialism came from exploiting white male labor, the truth is otherwise. Karl Marx, in his writings on *The Genesis of the Industrial Capitalist*, pointed out that the industrialization of Europe came directly from genocide:

“The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalised the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theater...

“...In England at the end of the 17th century, they arrive at a systematic combination, embracing the colonies, the national debt, the modern mode of

taxation, and the protectionist system. These methods depend in part on brute force, e.g., the colonial system. But they all employ the power of the State, the concentrated and organized force of society, to hasten, hothouse fashion, the process of transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition. Force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one. It is itself an economic power.



“Of the Christian colonial system, W. Howitt, a man who makes a specialty of Christianity, says: ‘The barbarities and desperate outrages of the so-called Christian race, throughout every region of the world, and upon every people they have been able to subdue, are not to be paralleled by those of any other race, however fierce, however untaught, and however reckless of mercy and shame, in any age of the earth.’

“The history of the colonial administration of Holland—and Holland was the head capitalistic nation of the 17th century—is one of the most extraordinary relations of treachery, bribery, massacre, and meanness.’ Nothing is more characteristic than their system of stealing men, to get slaves for Java... Wherever they set foot, devastation and depopulation followed. Banjuwangi, a province of Java, in 1750 numbered over 80,000 inhabitants, in 1811 only 18,000. Sweet commerce!...

“The treatment of the aborigines was, naturally, most frightful in plantation-colonies destined for export trade only, such as the West Indies, and in rich and well-populated countries, such as Mexico and India, that were given over to plunder. But even in the colonies properly so-called, the Christian character of primitive accumulation did not belie itself. Those sober virtuosi of Protestantism, the Puritans of New England, in 1703, by decrees of their assembly set a premium of 40 pounds on every Indian scalp and every captured red-skin; in 1720 a premium of 100 pounds on every scalp; in 1744, after Massachusetts Bay had proclaimed a certain tribe as rebels, the following prices: for a male scalp of 12 years and upwards 100 pounds (new currency), for a male prisoner 105 pounds, for women and children prisoners 50 pounds, for scalps of women and children 50 pounds...

“The colonial system ripened, like a hothouse, trade and navigation. The ‘societies Monopolia’ of Luther were powerful levers for concentration of capital. The colonies secured a market for budding manufactures, and, through the monopoly of the market, an increased accumulation. The treasures captured outside Europe by undisguised looting, enslavement, and murder, floated back to the [father]-country and were there turned into capital.”

Genocide is itself a material economic force; not mere racism, but the productive center, the heart of the new euro-capitalist world order. It took all the wealth violently squeezed out of the European laboring classes for centuries just to keep the ruling aristocracy, the Church, and the rising merchant-capitalists going; to pay for their luxurious lifestyle, their waste and speculation, and the always high cost of their wars and their parasitic State apparatus. On top of that, to build factories and finance new industries was only possible by additional super-profits from genocide.

The Belgian radical economist Ernest Mandel estimates how without such super-profits, Europe would have not had the capital to industrialize:

“a) E.J. Hamilton estimates in 500 million gold pesos the value of the gold and silver that the Spanish took to Europe between 1503 and 1660.

“b) Colenbrander calculates 600 million gold florins for the treasure that the Dutch East India Company took out of Indonesia between 1650 and 1780.

“c) Father Rinchon estimates as almost 500 million gold florins the profit on only the slave trade of French capital during the 18th century, without counting the profits obtained from the work of the slaves in the plantations of the West Indies, which was several times this amount.

“d) According to H. Wiseman and the *Cambridge History of the British Empire*, it is considered that the earnings obtained with the work of the slaves in the British West Indies were at least some 200 to 300 million gold pounds.

“e) Finally, in the pillage of India in the period of 1750 to 1800 only, the ruling class in Great Britain obtained between 100 and 150 million gold pounds. If these sums are added up, we get more than 1,000 million gold pounds, that is, more than the value of all the capital invested in all of the steam-operated industry of Europe around the year 1800.”

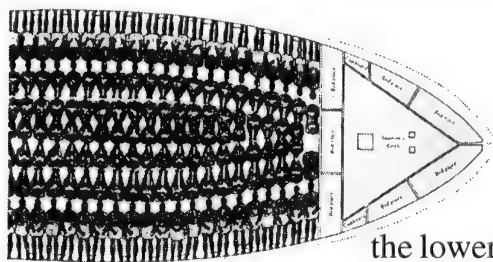


And Mandel does not even include the great profits reaped from the Afrikan slave trade by the British, the u.s. settlers, the Dutch and the Portuguese.

The cost in human lives is beyond comprehension, particularly when we want to pretend that it isn't happening ("I never knew anything about the gas chambers. How could we know what was happening to the Jews?"). Christopher Columbus led the first European invasion that occupied Hispaniola, the island containing both Haiti and the Dominican Republic. By his fourth trans-Atlantic voyage in 1502, he discovered that the once-large indigenous "Indian" population was being exterminated:

“Columbus was shocked by the change since his last sight of the island, and he was right in saying that the fortunes of Espanola [Hispaniola] depended on the natives. Las Casas was of the opinion that between 1494 and 1508 more than three million souls had perished on the island—slain in war, sent to Castile as slaves, or had been consumed in the mines and other labors. ‘Who of those born in future centuries will believe this? I myself who am writing this and saw it and know most about it can hardly believe such as possible... ’”

Columbus was stunned at the magnitude of the genocide he had witnessed, which he thought almost beyond belief. Yet, what he saw was only a warm-up. In Mexico within one century the Spanish occupation had depopulated the land, reduced the indigenous population from 25 million to 14 million. And had burned the great Mayan library, killed the priest-scientists, and deprived the de-urbanized slave survivors of much of their culture.



Overhead view, half
the lower deck of a slave ship

Together, the u.s. settlers, British, French, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish co-invaders killed some 100 million natives in the Western Hemisphere. And still the genocide goes on. It has, in fact, never even paused.

From Afrika, the Atlantic slave trade sold 900,000 young women and men into captive labor and death in the 16th century; 2.75 million Afrikans in the 17th century; 5.5 million in the 18th century; 4 million in the 19th century. Add to these millions the uncounted millions who died, packed like wood side-by-side in the stinking holds of the slave ships during the rough "middle passage" across the Atlantic; another 15-20% or more. Add to this total an equal number of Afrikans killed in the wars in the interior to get the slaves in the first place, or from the famines caused by these wars.

Finally, add onto all those millions of deaths the millions of Afrikans who were killed by the colonial powers to extract the mineral and agricultural wealth of the continent. Belgium, for example, industrialized itself from the super-profits gotten out of the great slave-labor mines of Congo, killing over 7 million persons according to their own historians. We know that the slave trade and euro-colonialism cost Afrika as many as 100 million lives over four centuries. Isn't it hard to picture 100 million deaths?

Walter Rodney said that genocide in Afrika was more than body counts, just as it was among the Mayan. Afrikan society was distorted, thrown into social chaos by the slave trade wars and the selective kidnapping of the young and able-bodied, with forced migration of nations, loss of economic roots, breakup of culture; and the bloody feeding of new oppressive and hierarchical Afrikan political empires (the forerunners of today's neo-colonial Afrikan nations). The negative effect was so great, he pointed out, that the population of Afrika as a whole stagnated for centuries:

Comparison of Population (in millions)			
	1650	1750	1850
Afrika	100	100	100
Europe	103	144	274
Asia	257	437	656

The true cost of industrializing Europe and the u.s.a., the cost of powering up Western consumer society, was genocide on a world scale. Hundreds of millions of persons were consumed, whole societies burned up in the process.

The patriarchy has long conditioned us on pain of prison or death to look the other way unthinkingly, to never see the genocide. Without breaking this lock, without confronting genocide, we can never know who we are and what we must become.

What produces a system that bases its daily life on doing genocide? The answer is, a commodity civilization that formed itself through centuries of repressing and terrorizing its own "internal colony" of women, killing millions of us. How could sane Afrikans or Indians guess what this strange euro-capitalism would ultimately do? To white men, who were "made" by a social process in which they shared in the torturing and killing of their mothers, wives, sisters and daughters, doing genocide to other peoples was no big deal at all. *Just another day at the office.*

Genocide against women cannot be separated from euro-capitalism, for it is both the father and the son of genocide against the colonized nations and peoples of the Third World. It is what led up to euro-colonialism, and what is the transformed and continuing wave of that genocide.

euro-capitalism pretends to be the bringer of modern enlightenment—education, careers, and equality—for downtrodden Third World women. The white missionary lady of the 19th century has been updated by u.s. for-ron aid and foundation feminism. Always, patriarchal imperialism says that the oppression of women is worse the darker the skin color, because it comes from the barbaric nature of less-developed, pre-industrial stages of human society that white people are nobly leading away from. Don't you agree that the sexism of Third World nations comes from "traditional native culture," "tribal backwardness," or "primitive religions and beliefs"?

Most of the oppression of women in the world is not primitive but modern, caused by the rise of class society in general. And euro-capitalism in particular. Women's oppression didn't begin with

euro-capitalism, of course (it was the other way around). All class society began with the fall of womankind, and our condition exists to lesser or greater degree throughout the world. There are few, if any, idyllic societies in history. Walter Rodney found that:

“It is interesting to note that while the Oba (king) of Benin was willing to sell a few female captives, it took a great deal of persuasion and pressure from Europeans to get him to sell male African prisoners of war, who would otherwise have been brought into the ranks of Benin society.”

Women began in equality, in primitive communism or communalism thousands of years ago. The development of male class societies is also the development of the oppression of women, not the answer to it. Which is why the only societies that have rivaled euro-capitalism in the oppression of women have been other capitalisms—such as Islamic mercantile capitalism—or other well-developed, hierarchical class societies such as feudal Japan. It isn't any coincidence that both the Islamic model and the feudal samurai model have real attraction for Third World men who want what white men have.



Agta are one of the few societies where women also hunt. Here a woman returns from a successful hunt.

The equality that euro-capitalism tells us to jump for is the so-called right to play an equal role in men's class society. In some societies before the hijacking of the world by euro-capitalism, women had their own economy and women's society alongside that of men. Two societies in one, with different and complementary roles and tasks. Of course, euro-capitalism tends to dismiss this as "native women doing their laundry together in the river."

But it's a powerful fact that for many women in the past, marriage was a social obligation to have children but one worked and lived in some real part in a women's society. How tangible and near in time this is, has been buried by our own colonialization.

We should understand the implications of Judith Van Allen's research on the 1929 Women's War (*Ogu Umunwanyi*) waged by tens of thousands of Igbo women in what is now eastern Nigeria, against the British empire:

"In November of 1929, thousands of Igbo women from these provinces converged on the Native Administration centers—settlements that generally included the headquarters and residence of the British colonial officer for the district, a Native Court building and a jail, and a bank or white trader's store (if such existed in the district). The women chanted, danced, sang songs of ridicule, and demanded the caps of office (the official insignia) of the Warrant Chiefs, the Igbo chosen from each village by the British to sit as members of the Native Court. At a few locations the women broke into prisons and released prisoners. Sixteen Native Courts were attacked, and most of these were broken up or burned. The 'disturbed area' covered about 6,000 square miles and contained about two million people. It is not known how many women were involved, but the figure was in the tens of thousands. On two occasions, British District Officers called in police and troops who fired on the women and left a total of more than 50 dead and 50 wounded. No one on the other side was seriously injured.

"The British 'won', and they have imposed their terminology on history; only a very few scholars have recorded that the Igbo called this the 'Women's War.' And in most histories of Nigeria today one looks in vain for any mention that women were even involved. 'Riots,' the term used by the British, conveys a picture of uncontrolled, irrational action involving violence to property and persons, or both. It serves to justify the 'necessary action to restore order,' and it accords with the British picture of the outpouring of Igbo from their villages as some sort of spontaneous frenzy, explained by the general 'excitability' of these 'least disciplined' of African peoples..."

Those Igbo women were trying to kick out British imperialism, but they were also acting, as was their right and duty in their Afrikan society, to defend their women's economy and women's society. For among the pre-imperialist Igbo, women shared an equality that went beyond anything women have in even the most industrialized nations today.

Each woman farmed her own plot of land & processed the palm seeds that men grew into palm oil (receiving the palm kernel itself as her payment). She marketed her own agricultural surplus, selling as well the baskets, pots and prepared foods that women made. Whatever she earned was hers to keep.

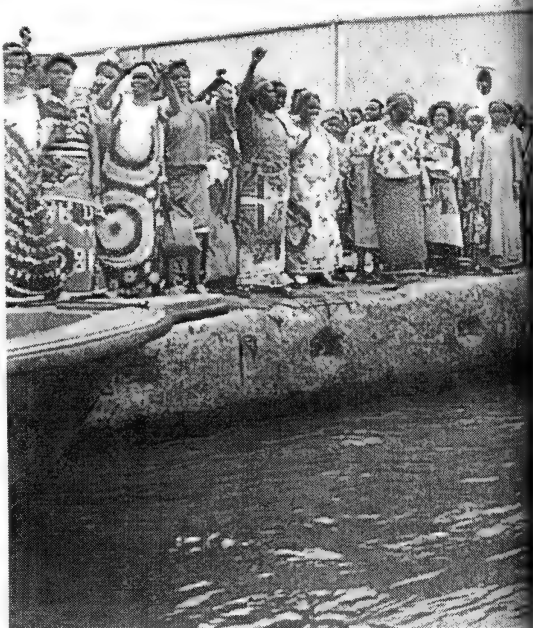
To protect themselves from the slavers Igbo women always traveled to market in pairs, carrying the stout wooden pestles used for grinding which were also each woman's personal weapon.

Now, Igbo society as a whole was organized into patrilineal clans, and was to outward appearances at least nominally a patriarchy. We could say that patriarchy had appeared but only in embryo. Men grew in their economy the most profitable crops and controlled the long-distance trading, while women controlled the local markets. Formal political leadership was held by men, although any women who wished to could take part in meetings of the village council (they had a saying: "Wisdom does not have a sex.").

This is in a different context than amerikkka. The Igbo didn't have the "civilized" conception of political leadership as control of the State, with a central authority enforcing decisions on the people. Instead, that Afrikan society governed by persuasion in a process of face-to-face discussion and consensus. Posts of leadership were positions of honorary status and not positions of command.

More importantly, the Igbo women had their *mikiri*, or village women's meetings, which existed as a parallel women's government to the mostly-male village assemblies. In the *mikiri*, Afrikan women shared their thoughts and troubles, coming together to defend women's self-interest as a people for the good of the larger society. Men who abused women or women's property (such as by letting their livestock fatten up on women's land) were stopped by the *mikiri*.

The *mikiri* wasn't like a middle-class women's group in the metropolis. It was a form of women's self-government, with real powers. Coming together in the *mikiri*, Afrikan women would make rules, both economic and social, that were binding on the whole village—men as well as women. Violators were subject to the women's strike, whereupon all women would refuse to trade with the man, cook food for him, have sex with him, or care for his small children. In a close-knit Afrikan village, such a sentence was much



heavier than it would be in our mass-anonymous society. Like a sentence of social death. Such ultimate punishment was rare, since men recognized the *mikiri*'s authority.

More common was the *mikiri* acting "to sit on a man," usually one who was beating a woman. All the women would surround his house, their faces decorated with ashes and carrying ferns and ceremonial sticks invoking the power of their women ancestors. Chanting insults and demands, singing ridicule, they would wear the angry man down. Any physical resistance by the man would be beat down by the massed women. If necessary, the women would pull his house down and destroy its contents.

It could go on for days. Only after he gave in, criticizing himself and promising to act differently in the future, would the women leave. This is the mechanism, named women's war by the Igbo, which many *mikiri* acting together invoked against the British in 1929.



The British colonizers, products of centuries of euro-capitalist terrorism and conditioning of women, knew nothing about Igbo women's self-government. In 1900 they had swallowed Northern Nigeria, where the Afrikan communal culture had been weakened by islamic capitalism, and where Afrikan women were therefore already stripped of their freedom and identity. So the British expected no trouble from Igbo women when they conquered the rest of Nigeria.

What at long last provoked the Women's War in 1929 was the rumor that the British, having already laid a heavy tax on men's livestock and produce, were planning to do the same to the separate women's economy. In a *mikin* of Oloko area, the three women leaders there decided, with general agreement, that any woman approached for taxes must spread the word so all could deal with it collectively.

"On November 23, an agent of the Oloko Warrant Chief, Okugo, entered a compound and told one of the married women, Nwanyeruwa, to count her goats and sheep. She replied angrily, 'Was your mother

counted?' at which 'they closed, seizing each other by the throat.' Nwanyeruwa's report to the Oloko women convinced them they were to be taxed. Messengers

were sent to neighboring areas, and women streamed into Oloko from all over Owerri

Province. They 'sat on' Okugo and demanded his cap of office. They massed in protest at the District Office and succeeded in getting written assurances that they were not to be taxed.



After several days of mass protest meetings, they also succeeded in getting Okugo arrested, tried, and convicted of 'spreading news likely to cause alarm' and of physical assault on the women. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment.

"News of this victory spread rapidly through the market-*mikiri-ogbo* network, [*ogbo* were women's associations based on lineage or natal village] and women in many areas then attempted to get rid of their Warrant Chiefs and the Native Administration itself. Nwanyeruwa became something of a heroine as reports of her resistance spread. Money poured in from grateful women from villages scattered over a wide area but linked by kinship to Nwanyeruwa's marital village. Nwanyeruwa herself, however, was 'content to allow' leadership in her area to be exercised by someone else. The money collected was not used for her but for delegates going to meetings of women throughout southern Igboland to coordinate the Women's War.

"The British ended the rebellion only by using large numbers of police and soldiers—and, on one occasion, the Boy Scouts. Although the shootings in mid-December and the growing number of police and soldiers in the area led the women to halt most of their activities, disturbances continued into 1930. The 'disaffected areas'—all of Owerri and Calabar provinces—were occupied by government forces. Punitive expeditions burned or demolished compounds, took provisions from the villages to feed the troops, and confiscated property in payment of fines levied arbitrarily against villages in retribution for damages."

Igbo women had made the formal demand that "all white men should go to their own country." At the very least, they demanded that British women be appointed as District Officers, in accordance with the equality of power customary to their dual-gender government system. To Oxford-educated Englishmen, this sounded



irrational, like a satire or an insult. Accustomed to already-broken European women, they were unable to understand the extent of those Afrikan women's self-assertion and self-government. One man wrote back to London that it was all a hoax to make fun of the British Crown, that the Afrikan men had probably coached their wives behind the scenes on what to do and say.

The British moved to wipe out the *nikiri* and to reduce Afrikan women down to the powerless and dependent state of white women. Their colonial administration created an oppressive patriarchical machinery where none had existed before the 20th century. Native courts and native government and native police were created—all male, in European uniforms, structured on Western lines, and under imperialist command.

Use of force by women was outlawed; "to sit on" a man or to call a women's strike against him was made illegal. In the euro-capitalist way, all women's complaints had to be submitted to a Native Court of men, whose verdicts based on capitalist law would be enforced by other men carrying rifles. So among the Igbo, while patriarchy was already visible in embryo form, its full, sickening rise didn't come from any traditional culture. It was done as government policy by white men, graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, from offices in London during the 20th century.

i doubt that Igbo women thought they were in paradise, or that Igbo society was anything remotely like a Utopia. Yet and again, they had—and fought to keep—something that we don't even remember we lost. In the u.s.a., "equality" and "equal justice under law" (those mythical beasts no one has ever seen) are understood as women becoming lawyers and plaintiffs in the patriarchal legal system. Demanding that dick's system should protect us and our children from dick—please? 'Course we know how well that works. Igbo women had a different concept, their own communal justice system. All women personally joined in making women's laws and enforcing women's justice. No cops, no lawyers, no judges, no dick. Of course, that's kinda communistic.

Heavy capitalist State taxes sucked the life out of the traditional women's farming for use, while the new imperialist economy of wage-labor, exploitative as it was, was largely reserved for men. Women's commerce lost ground as the new industrial products came in, sold by Western companies and their male Afrikan employees and partners. For most Igbo women in the new economy, there were at first only two choices of wage-labor: domestic servant and prostitute.

There was one ray of hope permitted in the new colonial system, that of a better individual life through Western education. This was provided by British women missionaries (the forerunners of foundation feminism), who demanded as a condition that each Afrikan family whose girls entered school give up "pagan" customs such as the *nikiri*. Christianity, like its brothers Islam and Judaism, was the enemy of women's community not merely in theory but in fact.

If the white soldier was the "stick" to smash Igbo women's society, white women were used to dangle the "carrot" to lure desperate women away from their culture. Girls school had a different curriculum than boys, blending the same Christian indoctrination with "home economics" training on how to be a good housewife for an upwardly-educated Afrikan man. Just as in the long centuries of the Witchhunt, euro-capitalism intended to wipe out "women" and replace them with "wives," if we understand the difference.

Again, i ask, who was backward and who was advanced?

Many Igbo women were surprised that any men, even savage Europeans, could be so perverted as to shoot into women's rightful demon-

stitutions, which had been called by the full women's authority. To them this violated the most basic social compact that held the human race together. But then, Afrikan women knew nothing about the Witchhunt, didn't know that white euro-civilization had already tortured and executed millions of their own women to lay the foundation for this new social order. Genocide against women is intrinsic to the rise of capitalism as a world social system, just as it is intrinsic to neo-colonialism today.

euro-capitalism didn't simply occupy a nation or people militarily. It dug in and expanded its rule by invading the culture of the oppressed nation, like the HIV virus takes over the command center of a healthy cell, altering its class structure and culture to mimic the oppressor. Everywhere, euro-capitalism continued the Witchhunt in new forms, taking land away from women, destroying the women's economy and independence, raising up a native patriarchy ("We'll make a man of you, son") which got addicted to capitalistic values, including the oppression of women.

Somali Women Stride Ahead
Despite the Scars of Tradition

Figure 2. The effect of the concentration of the monomer on the polymerization of 1.

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This was done consciously, since the imperialists knew very well (much better than socialists did) that their system was impossible without the destruction of women as a people. They succeeded so well that even the very idea of genocide against women is missing from our minds.



Nayar women in India's Kerala province had never personally experienced patriarchy or class exploitation until the British conquest in the 19th century. Nayar lived in the *taravad*, their large matrilineal joint households, where land and its products were used in common. Nayar women could have more than one husband in their household (i.e., polyandry), so there was no individual fatherhood in the way amerikkuns are used to. Family identity was only in the motherline. Men bequeathed personal property not to their biological children, but to their sister's children. Households passed from mother to daughter.

British capitalism roughly broke all this up. New colonial marriage law replaced the "promiscuous" Nayar women-centered household with the patriarchal monogamous family, just as new British-imposed inheritance law instructed Nayar men to leave their property to

their first-born son instead of their maternal family. And the British made sure that Nayar men had private property of their own. The Nayars were not a primitive people, and the British occupation recruited Nayar men as white-collar clerks in their colonial civil service. This gave Nayar men alone a cash income. None of this was by accident, of course.

"Men and women are not sufficiently differentiated yet in Burma," warned Fielding Hall, the Political Officer for Burma in the British colonial service in 1887-1891. "It is the mark of a young race. Ethnologists tell us that. In the earliest peoples the difference was very slight. As a race grows older the difference increases..."

As a Political Officer, Hall supervised—with much personal satisfaction—the stamping out of Burmese women's independence and the remolding of Burmese culture: "*In Rangoon the large English stores are undermining the bazaars where the women used to earn an independent livelihood. With her power of independence will disappear her free will and her influence.*"

Hall then says that "*it is inevitable*" that women should lose their influence, for "*the nations who succeed are not feminine nations but the masculine.*"

U.S. Confirms Reports of Mass Rapes by Burmese

By STEVEN K. WEISMAN

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28 — The United States has obtained corroborating evidence that mass rapes of hundreds of girls and women have been planned not by the Burmese army in central Shan Province, where the military government has ruled for years in disregard of ethnic minorities, the State Department said today.

A department spokesman told the United States government had received "strong evidence" about the rapes and other abuses in Myanmar, formerly Burma, and urged the government there to punish anyone guilty of "such heinous crimes."

Washington has also called for the United Nations to carry out a more extensive investigation of the rape charges, which were first made by human rights groups.

The Burmese government has denied the allegations.

Washington has cooperated with other countries to impose economic and political sanctions against the military junta of Myanmar. The January 1988 pact led to the release of the results of a parliamentary election in 1988 that was boycotted internationally by the National League for

Democracy, the political party led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Earlier this year, several human rights organizations published reports alleging human rights violations by the military in its effort to crush ethnic uprisings.

Reports prepared by the Asian Human Rights Foundation and the Asian Women's Action Network, and other groups had accused of large-scale rapes and murder of a "scapegoat" group of ethnic Chinese living in government-occupied areas of northern Thailand for safety.

In November, James A. Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, said rape was not the only abuse against minorities. "We are deeply troubled by extrajudicial killings, forced relocations and forced labor that have intensified the refugee flow into Thailand this year and created a large population of internally displaced people," he said.

In general, Mr. Kelly said, the regime earlier this year of Gen. Ne Win, Suu Kyi's father, the principal Burmese opposition leader, from whose arrest had resulted in the ending of political repression, as many human rights groups hoped, a path for political

organization, was allowed to open some offices around the country.

In August, the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor reported to congressional committees of the rape charges, listing several women who gave statements, detailed accounts from northern Thailand, where they had fled. Some said they had been gang-raped by soldiers, while some were claiming back five years. A 12-year-old girl, said she had been raped in June.

"As the victim's number increased, women were identified by their names, were identified sexually and made to whisper it all," according to a State Department report released on Dec. 17 and described today in The Washington Post. "The other women asked questions as they recalled horrific incidents of their own rapes as well as other rapes, beatings and murders of family members."

The report said that although the government was "increasingly uncooperative," the abuses were consistent with such crimes and therefore credible.

The State Department said that it agreed with several investigations and to carry out its own inquiry.



Nearest killing field in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, where the bodies of the girl young women were found a year ago.

Wave of Women's Killings Confound Juárez

By GINGER THOMPSON

lack of police plans for grave-roving, of missing young daughters about 400," she said. "I ORDER STOP LET THE violence begin."

Which brings us here and now. A newspaper story poked me in the eye yesterday: "U.S. RANKS THIRD AMONG 99 NATIONS IN STUDY OF EQUALITY FOR WOMEN." But isn't settler amerikkka the most "masculine nation" of all? For no other major nation has been built so purely on world genocide. Our whitelife has no history, no identity, no culture, no economy without genocide. *Outside of genocide we are a blank.*

amerikkkans want to distance themselves from genocide. You know, it's always something long ago ("You can't change the past") or far away ("There's never been anything like the Jewish Holocaust"). But genocide is running, right now. It's not far away. You see, we are the genocide, i mean that literally and precisely. Everything we are, our bodies and our education, our careers and our plans for our children, has *all* been made of genocide.

That's why we don't want to know who we are.





Science & Learning to Resist

i want to talk about white women in amerikkka both because that is what i am and because european women have a different herstory than ours. Although we often wish to pretend that we are the same. That is when we are not busy pretending that women of indigenous nations & Latinas & New Afrikan women are just us with different colored skin. All just sisters, right or wrong?

In the previous chapter we discussed how the long rise of euro-capitalism, beginning in the 13th century, led masses of european women to fight back by regrouping themselves into the Beguines, a communal working women's culture with women's houses, women's neighborhoods, and women's fortified towns. This community sheltered a radical women's conspiracy against the ruling classes. The rising euro-capitalism only gained its unique powers by genocide against women, by the institutionalized killings and terror and looting of women in the centuries long Witchhunt.

And, when armed with this power, euro-capitalism expanded to invade other continents, it encountered many societies in which women had always had real power & real equality. We used one example of Igbo women in Nigeria, where within a society with patriarchal trends those Afrikan women still had their own separate women's economy & women's self-government (parallel to that of men), whose rules were enforced by what in our terms would be a women's militia. Enforced on *men* as well as women.

We are so unlike those free women that we can't recognize them. They are less real to us than dolphins and redwoods. Nor are we the European women who waged their own communal conspiracy against the invading capitalism for generations, and were only defeated by the Witchhunt after untold deaths. Amerikkkan feminists wanna believe we are those women, but we aren't.

For one, those women's communities were *anti-capitalist*. That is, they had communal worker economies and in both cases their political struggles were against the invasive euro-capitalism. To

stay separate from it. But during most of the herstory of our white women's movement, it's been accepted as fact that patriarchal imperialism is something we have to live with, accommodate to. We've spent much of our energies getting *into* it. It's so good for white men that most white women always think if we can just smooth out the rough edges it'll be great for us, too. So free women were fighting to get *out* while we're fighting to co-exist *within* it. Not the same at all.

The other thing is genocide. Those free women were fighting genocide, while white women in amerikkka are the sterilized result of genocide. We must describe genocide as a culture precisely because it is an accepted way of life to us. Which is why white women don't want to see that the first genocide is against women. It cuts too close to home.

We're still afraid to see that we are not what women were, that we are stripped of being women. In communal non-class societies women were a people strong physically & strong ethically. Strong as community. We *made* human community, and controlled reproduction as our science. Women as a people were self-reliant. What we needed we did for self, whether it was weaving textiles or developing agriculture or teaching our young. Production and reproduction and other sciences were shared by women's community.

Today there's billions of us but we don't have a housing program or a transportation system or a foreign policy. Wars go on all around us & over us but we have no army & no defense plan. We're not in any map & no one has to take account of us because we're not even in the ballpark. One white woman today may be a karate black belt or a cop, but that doesn't mean she can defend herself from a surprise attack or a gang attack, or that a hundred other women on the next block are any safer. That's proven fact. It's not the same as a community of women that didn't permit any strange or unapproved men to live around them & expelled men by force if necessary. Yet we are taught to never have communal *women's* solutions to our problems. Just individual *white* solutions.

Genocide doesn't always mean total physical elimination of a nation or people, when the oppressor needs your body live. Euro-capitalism in the Witchhunt burned *millions* of women, remember,

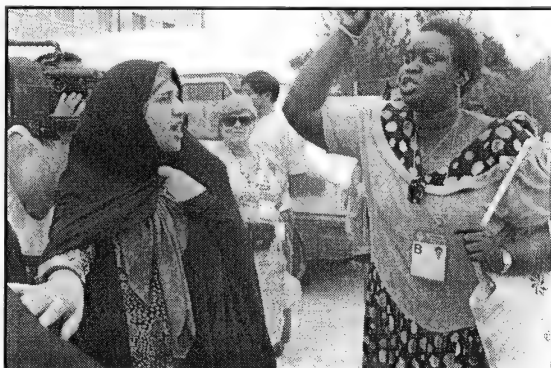
to destroy women as a people who had our own communalism and culture. The terrorized survivors were needed as property, for our labor & our reproduction. But we weren't permitted to gather together or live together in any numbers. We were split up and parceled out to men "piece" by "piece" while the patriarchal State appointed itself our guardian & the regulator of our bodies.

We're much less than women were *yet we deny our own genocide.*

We can't see it yet, because if we saw how genocide worked on us then we'd have to see how we've been reduced to helping do that same genocide to New Afrikan women, to Puerto Rican women, to women of indigenous nations.

Since our white privileges are 100% dependent on us doing that, we deny "other" women's genocide. We think of the housing projects that so many sisters are confined to as "housing", when really they're more akin to reservations or koncentration kamps — you don't really think they built projects 'cause Black people needed housing, do you? Actually, that *is* what we wanna think even though it's a silly thought. They run projects because they wanted social prisons for Black women like they have criminal prisons for Black men.

We force them to live there or be homeless, then we flood the projects with dope & alcohol & guns (none of which New Afrikan men produce but all of which are mysteriously freely available to them in any quantity no matter how poor they are) while our police threaten and disarm the women.





Israeli soldier picked for Elle fashion mag spread loses her tongue and lower jaw in West Bank ambush

When photographer Roni Sofer set out to catalog the life of a female Israeli soldier on and off duty for Elle magazine, army officers immediately nominated Cheri Abramov. "You can count on her to watch your back," they said. Last week, the 19-year-old lost her tongue and much of her lower jaw when she was shot during a terrorist ambush. LEFT: Abramov prepares for a night out dancing. RIGHT: At target practice. Details, Page 6.

Like the patriarchy has given us the wink and the nod, so we know we got dick's permission to go after penthouses & hustlers. We're so self-righteously "anti-porn" 'cause we're too terrorized ourselves to be anti-rape, anti-cop. Just think, tho. Isn't it true when we were first enslaved that men didn't have no playboy, only the bible, the talmud & the koran? Millions more women have died 'cause of the bible than hustler. But we're justly too scared to cross dick, to get him mad at us.

The failure of amerikkkan women to extract ourselves from patriarchy, from economic collaboration, from parasitism, from physical submission to the rule of men has led to the hostility and derision the masses of Third World women feel toward us & our movements. New Afrikan and Puerto Rican women conduct continuous guerrilla warfare as they come up against us in their daily lives. Whether we appear as case workers, teachers, cops, or university professors, they do not fail to see that we are the comb that divides the strands of who shall live and who shall die.



They are under no delusion that we are an independent community of women that can relate to their nations, and peoples in revolutionary struggle. They hide their lives from us because they know that we will betray them to dick.

We are weaker in the face of our male oppressor than they are in dealings with men of their nations. Even tho we believe the opposite. Genocide against the New Afrikan nation has been held at bay by their strength. Else why do our boys flood their neighborhoods with armies of cops & gangs & drug dealers? They are as yet undefeated. Function much more as communities of women. Don't doubt it.

Quick pictures: i remember a New Afrikan woman on my block threatening to throw her caseworker head first down the stairs if that white woman didn't stop threatening to take her kids away. Next day all the "welfare women" threatened the worker. Day after, no more worker.

Eleanor Bumpurs, elderly and ill and alone in her project apartment in Harlem. They sent an army of cops to do her, a six-pack of SWAT with flak jackets and shotguns and all. 'Cause they were afraid of her. She might hurt them. They didn't doubt it.

Sisters think Miss Ann is one sad case.

SCIENCES OF RESISTANCE

Women have relative to men today much, much less science than the communities of women did before Man's class society. Once most of the available technology was manifested in textiles, pottery, horticulture, medicine and other women's terrain. Women were once the artists, technicians & scientists of the human race. Today, patriarchy has whole developed sciences of their own, an overall male system of knowledge that gets things done the way they want it. However lumbering & messed up it is, it works for them, this "B-52 science." The patriarchy says that our only ambition can be to join these sciences men have made for themselves & their world.

We are in the *first* stage of rediscovering and developing women's sciences in a modern context. There is no doubt that in, say, the year 1492 that much of women's sciences in one part of the world or another was superior to the science of patriarchal euro-capitalism. But they systematically blocked off the future development of those earlier women's sciences by destroying the economy & culture they grew out of. At the same time, euro-capitalism looted women's sciences around the world to enrich men's sciences.

It's wrong to mistake the products of science for the science itself. White men, for instance, spent over 500 years unsuccessfully trying to make alchemy work. Alchemy is the mythical secret of transforming base metals such as lead into gold. For 500 years euro-scientists worked & lusted after this—and in vain. But out of all their factual accumulation, their experiments with reagents, their work organizing knowledge learned from other peoples, came modern Western chemistry in the 17th century. Sir Isaac Newton, the English discoverer of the law of inertia & a historic physicist and chemist, was also the last great alchemist. Sciences develop from diverse attempts to organize knowledge, from religions, from crafts, from wrong & even fantastical theories. Women's sciences were denied that full dialectic of development.

We are still beginners, not leaders. When it came to our own bodies, then we saw that women needed our own science. Wasn't the writing & publishing of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* such a milestone

to us? Weren't feminist health collectives so basic to the early explosion of our women's movement? And isn't "Jane," the clandestine abortion service operated illegally by feminists in Chicago during the pre-Roe vs. Wade dark ages, a prideful thing to us even now?

Because we knew that we could never take back control of our bodies from the patriarchy unless we had all the knowledge. Because we sense that that which we do for ourselves, communally as outlaws, outside of men's laws & structures, is what is most free. But most of us still don't understand that it revolves around the further development of our own communal sciences.

It was customary in "other" societies for reproduction to be controlled by the *community* of women. We know this, but we refuse to see what they did as involving science (i.e. an organized system of knowledge). A science that was political for women.

After the defeat of the 1904 Herero Rebellion in Namibia against German colonialism, for example, those Afrikan women went on a birth-strike. They refused to provide more children to be slave



laborers for the white plantations. Noting that the Herero population fell from 80,000 to only 19,962 between 1892 and 1909, Maria Mies quotes a complaining white settler:

“After the rebellion the native, particular the Herero, often takes the stand not to produce children... While the German farmers have been trying for years to remedy this sad state of affairs by offering a premium for each child born on the farm, for instance, a she-goat. But mostly in vain. A section of today’s native women has been engaged for too long in prostitution and are spoiled for motherhood. Another part does not want children and gets rid of them, when they are pregnant, through abortion. In such cases the authorities should interfere with all severity. Each case should be investigated thoroughly and punished by prison...”

Those Afrikan women in Namibia limited births as women’s *strategy*, without any AMA or “ER”, because there, as in much of the world, women healers had learned to use native herbs and plants to induce abortion. Afrikan women in the Slave South used wild tansy. In Surinam they used a vegetable flower called “seven-broom” and green pineapple. Rhoda Reddock reminds sisters that Afrikan women slaves in Jamaica had not only used abortions to limit the supply of new slave labor but had resisted the slaveowner’s attempts to impose monogamous marriage to Afrikan men on them. By controlling their reproductive power those sisters played a big role in bringing down chattel slavery in the British colonies:

“...they were surprised by the resistance shown by the slave women who... recognized clearly their position as the property of the plantation owners. The fact is, that for more than 100 years, the majority of slave women in the Caribbean were neither wives nor mothers and by exercising control over their reproduction capabilities were able to deeply affect the plantation economy.”

It's fact that communities of Afrikan women had an early science of reproduction different from that of Harvard & Yale. A non-invasive women's science passed on by healers from mother to daughter. They had, relative to the euro-patriarchy of their time, more science than we do now. Which is why college-educated white women who feel quite superior to "other" have to beg the Big Nine for dick's permission to buy an abortion, while Afrikan slave women controlled their reproduction as a communal conspiracy despite the watchful eye & the lash of the slave overseer. We think we're so superior, but really we're backward & dependent.

White women are just beginning to see the dimensions of our need for sciences of resistance. Our need in the first place because we have to re-invent ourselves as a people, almost from scratch (and isn't that what we've been struggling toward for 20 years

now?). It isn't a matter for us of simply having equal rights, because free women's community with its culture, its structure of relationships, its material foundation in production and reproduction, has long been wiped out in euro-civilization. White women of amerikkka have never known any other life here than dick's live-in assistants in capitalism's invasion & occupation. If you think for a moment of "white woman" as a job title or a military rank you'll have a better sense of what i mean.



The other reason we need science to the max is that our struggle doesn't take place in a neutral setting, but within a vast killer culture. Like all oppressed people we need to be able to deal with force, with massive violence, as a practical fact of life. Every inch of this country and every body & blade of grass in it is owned by patriarchal imperialism, a killer culture which will butcher you, me, our kids, too & 10,000 other women the day they think it necessary. We know it, too, which is why we back down so often. Even on that one night a year when white women have their little march & promise ourselves that someday we're going to take back what we lost.

It's not about guns, you know. It's about knowing who you are. In any revolution, in any social crisis, any struggle for freedom, women suddenly break out and become incandescent with change. *Because, really, it all began with us and can only end with us.* Human oppression began with the erosion of the indigenous communal societies into men's ownership of women and "his" children that we produced. That was their first captive labor force, which by sacred male custom even the poorest man is supposed to be entitled to. Women were the first subject people categorized by biology, the first oppressed race. It all leads back to us.



Which is why in any social upheaval, any cracks in the patriarchal order, women break out, begin being “crazy” and changing ourselves. Oppressors are thrown into confusion when this happens, but soon recognize it with hatred as the most fundamental challenge to their being.

When we look at the lives of feminist revolutionaries a hundred years ago, it is noteworthy how fresh, how modern they seem. In some cases they could be young revs of the 21st century. It is the power of Women’s Liberation that shines through their lives.

Jiu Jin was born in 1875 and was executed by the Chinese government in 1907. She is known as one of the pioneers in the Chinese women’s struggle. Jiu Jin made herself into a feminist poet and a woman warrior, one who had taught herself swordfighting and riding.

The first woman member of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen’s historic revolutionary nationalist movement, Jiu Jin wanted a women’s army to free China from the oppressive Manchu dynasty, the white and Japanese imperialist invaders, and the chains of patriarchy. She began by illegally leaving the arranged marriage her well-to-do family had forced her into. Her story, as related by Elisabeth Croll in *Feminism and Socialism in China*, could be a story of our times:

“She founded a revolutionary society among women students and applied to become a member of the Restoration League, later part of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen’s ‘Revolutionary Alliance.’ At first her application was refused on ‘the grounds of her sex’. Eventually, unable to resist her entreaties they permitted her to become the first woman member. She spoke at numerous meetings, often wrote articles for the periodicals published by Chinese students and was said to stir her audience with her passionate patriotism and her clear analysis of events in China.

“In 1906 she returned to China where she manufactured explosives and founded a woman’s magazine. Both projects were short-lived and within

a few months she had returned to Zhejiang to take up an appointment as principal of the Tatung College of Physical Culture. Here she founded a branch of the Revolutionary League, raised funds, established contacts with secret societies and built up a peoples' and a separate women's army at her school. In league with her cousin she helped to engineer a number of sporadic uprisings which prematurely exploded and were put down. Her revolutionary enthusiasm and strong feminism aroused hostility, and opposition to her activities was such that within a year she had been arrested and executed.

"Jiu Jin through her personal struggle against the restraints surrounding a feminine role became a conscious feminist. In her personal life she often assumed the name '*Quinxiong*', which means '*Compete with men*,' and one photograph portrays her dressed as a man in Western clothes with quite a jaunty cloth cap. Her poem '*Strive for Women Power*' reveals her impatience with men's superiority and repression:

*"We women love our freedom,
Raise a cup of wine to our efforts for freedom;
May Heaven bestow equal power on men, women.
We would rise in fight, yes! Drag ourselves up...*

*"Former practice was deeply humiliating:
Maidens, young girls were actually mated like
cows, mares.
New light dawns in time of illustrious culture.
Man's desire to stand alone, supreme, to enslave us
Underlings must be torn up by the roots..."*

While Jiu Jin became famous after her death among young women in China, and as a feminist poet and a woman warrior continued to inspire many to become revolutionaries, she was more typical than not for feminists. During the 1911 Nationalist revolution there was continual conflict between nationalist men trying to hold

their doors shut and thousands of young women fighting their way into the armed struggle, as nurses, spies, ammunition smugglers, assassins, and soldiers. Women made uniforms for themselves and organized into units such as the Zhejiang Women's Army, the National Women's Army, the Women's Murder Squad, and the Amazon Corps of the Dare to Die Soldiers. The last was an assassination force of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen's party, formed to wipe out key counter-revolutionaries in Beijing.

More than a patriotic struggle was happening. Young Chinese women by the thousands, and then the hundreds of thousands, were building themselves into a cultural revolution. Not a change in male rulers or governments, but the attempted overthrowing of an entire society and its culture. These women themselves began to go through intense changes of the kind we know. As a public sign that they refused to "bow our heads" to patriarchy, the young rebels cut their hair short and often wore either men's dress, uniforms, or practical garb of their own choosing. This was a sensation. Reactionary men were enraged. While lesbians here get harassed and attacked by men in public for not conforming, in China then for rebellious women to stop posturing in male-prescribed ways, to declare in their appearance that they were out of male control, was a brave stand defying the real threat of lynching or execution. Thousands were killed.



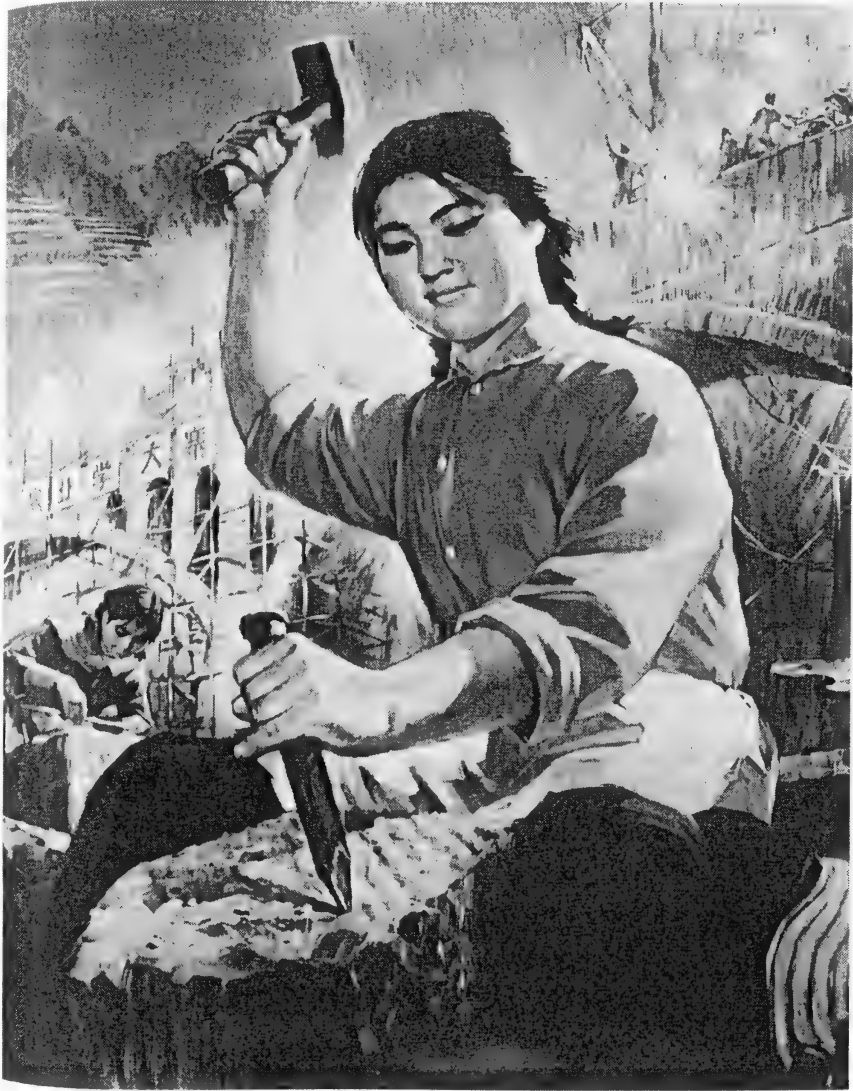
"Little Eagle Spreads Her Wings" (photo eeava-inkeri)

Women took these risks because taking part in the Revolution and the armed struggle were a personal means of overcoming the patriarchy around them. In 1927 the new Nationalist government established a women's military college in Wauchang for propagandists who would work with the army on its Northern Expedition to finish retaking the country. This was a communist project, actually. Almost all of the new students were teenagers escaping marriages. As one later put it: *"Where could she go, a girl under twenty years of age and without half a piece of cash to bless herself with?"* There was a consciousness of rejecting not only the old Chinese bondage of forced marriage servitude, but also the new Western bondage of preoccupation with "love" romance with a man as the supposed fulfillment of woman's life. Croll shows this in the words of one of the students:

"As soon as we had learned to sing the chorus of the Revolutionary song called 'Struggle', everyone of us liked to hum the chorus:

*"Train quickly to become the Vanguard of the people,
To wipe away the old ways, and Down with Love,
Accomplish the Socialist Revolution, you great women."*

"Every time they sang the phrase 'Down with Love', she said, 'we would always shout especially loudly, as if we wanted to warn all our friends that during the time of our mission we were not going to give any thought to love.'... She said they were ready to sacrifice their lives in order to create a future society which could be enjoyed by all members of society. For 'unless the old system was completely shattered, womankind could never be freed.'"



“Women Hold Up Half the Sky” (photo eeva-inkeri)

Few remember today that the word “communist” was chosen by poor working class rebels in 19th century Europe, following the example set by the “Communards” of the Paris Commune of 1871. This first socialist and anarchist government by the oppressed took over the city of Paris when the capitalist government surrendered to the victorious German invaders in the Franco-Prussian War of 1871. The revolutionary democracy held Paris only briefly, from March through the end of May, 1871, until the French capitalist army from Versailles (the former French royal estate) retook its capital in an orgy of mass rapes and executions.



caricature of a communarde

What most outraged world capitalist opinion about the Commune was the self-liberation of women. The elder Dumas, a reactionary writer, expressed the spirit of his class: **“We shall say nothing about their females, out of respect for women—whom these resemble once they are dead.”** The correspondent for the *London Times* wrote with disquiet: **“If the French Nation were composed of nothing but women, what a terrible nation it would be.”** Capitalism was naked in its fear of these women, who were feminists as well as being from the poorest classes—seamstresses, prostitutes, laborers.

In her account of the women of the Commune, *The Women Incendiaries*, Edith Thomas tells us of how the French government retook Paris from the people:

“In spite of bitter local defenses, the Versailles troops advanced little by little. At the corner of the Rue Racine and the Rue Ecole de Medecine, the barricade was

held by women. On the Rue du Pot-de-Fer, women were fighting. On the Rue Mouffetard women brought a fleeing sergeant back into the fighting. In the Place du Pantheon, women prepared rifles, while the men fired. The barricade on the Place du Chateau-d'Eau exerted a sort of fascination. An English medical student, who had set up an ambulance alongside it, tells us: 'Just at the moment when the National Guards began to retreat, a women's battalion turned up; they came forward on the double and began to fire, crying "**Long live the Commune.**" They were armed with Snider carbines, and shot admirably. They fought like devils... ' Fifty-two were killed there. Among them, a girl in her twenties, dressed like a member of the Fusilier Marin, 'rosy and beautiful with her curly black hair,' fought all day long: Marie M., whose first name at least we know among all these dead, anonymous women who will never be counted. The English student goes on:

"A poor woman was fighting in a cart, and sobbing bitterly... I offered her a glass of wine and a piece of bread. She refused, saying "*For the little time I have left to live, it isn't worth the trouble.*" The woman



The Women's Battalion at the Place Blanche Barricade



Execution of a Pétroleuse
(*The Graphic*, June 10 1871)

was taken by four soldiers, who undressed her. An officer interrogated her: "*You have killed two of my men.*" The woman began to laugh ironically and replied harshly: "*May God punish me for not having killed more. I had two sons at Issy; they were both killed. And two at Neuilly. My husband died at this barricade—and now do what you want with me.*" I did not hear any more; I crawled away, but not soon enough to avoid hearing the command "*Fire,*" which told me that everything was over.'

"But repression struck not only the fighting men and women taken with weapon in hand, or those who openly proclaimed themselves responsible for their acts; it struck at random. Every poor woman was suspected... Any expression of grief alongside the common graves in which the Federals were heaped up was proof of complicity. Any weeping woman was an 'insurgent female'.

“As for the women who were executed, they were treated somewhat like unfortunate Arabs belonging to insurgent tribes*. After they were shot, while they were still in their death throes, they were stripped of some of their clothes, and sometimes the insult went further, as in the Faubourg Montmartre or the Place Vendome, where women were left naked and sullied upon the sidewalks.

“But among all these women who soldiered for the Commune, a place apart must be given Louise Michel; her great figure dominated them all. She was everywhere at once: soldier, ambulance nurse, orator. She was to be found in the Clubs and on the battlefields, in the Montmartre Vigilance Committee and in the ambulance stations she helped to organize.

“She also proposed to undertake a strange mission: that of going in person to Versailles to assassinate Thiers, whom she believed to be the most responsible for the situation. Ferre and Rigault, to whom she disclosed this plan, succeeded in dissuading her from it; the murders of Generals Clement Thomas and Lecomte had already aroused public opinion against the Commune.

“‘*Besides,*’ they added, ‘*you won’t be able to get as far as Versailles.*’

“Louise Michel wanted to prove to them that this plan, although perhaps absurd, was feasible. She got so ‘dressed up that *“I did not recognize myself,”*’ reached Versailles without interference, and made her way into the park in which the army was camped; there she propagandized for the March 18th Revolution, and left as tranquilly as she had come. Then she bought newspapers in a large bookstore.

*Rebel women were like Arabs, like “insurgent tribes” who are outside of european civilization and who resist the colonization of the Master Race.

Since she did not lack a sense of humor, she enjoyed reading the greatest ill of the blood-thirsty Louise Michel. Finally she came back to Paris, bearing the Versailles newspapers as trophies.

“But her courage and audacity were not satisfied with these dangerous pranks. She was everywhere—at Neuilly, at Les Moulineaux, at the Issy fort—with her rifle in her hand. *‘Thus I had, as comrades-in-arms, the Enfants Perdus in the Hautes-Brnyeres, the artillerymen at Issy, and at Neuilly, the scouts of Montmartre’*—and, especially, the Federals of the 61st Battalion, to which she belonged.

“An energetic woman fought in the ranks of the 61st Battalion; she has killed several policemen and gendarmes.’ They gave her a Remington rifle instead of her old one. *‘For the first time, I have a good weapon.’* She has left us several vignettes of that war, at once workmanlike and murderous: *‘Now we are fighting. This is battle. There is a rise, where I run ahead crying “To Versailles! to Versailles!” Razoua throws me his saber, to rally the men. We clasp hands on high, under a rain of shells. The sky is on fire.’* She opposed the timorous and shamed the hesitant. A panic-stricken Federal wanted to surrender the Clamart station: *‘Go ahead if you want to,’* she said, *‘but I will stay here, and I’ll blow up the station if you surrender it.’*

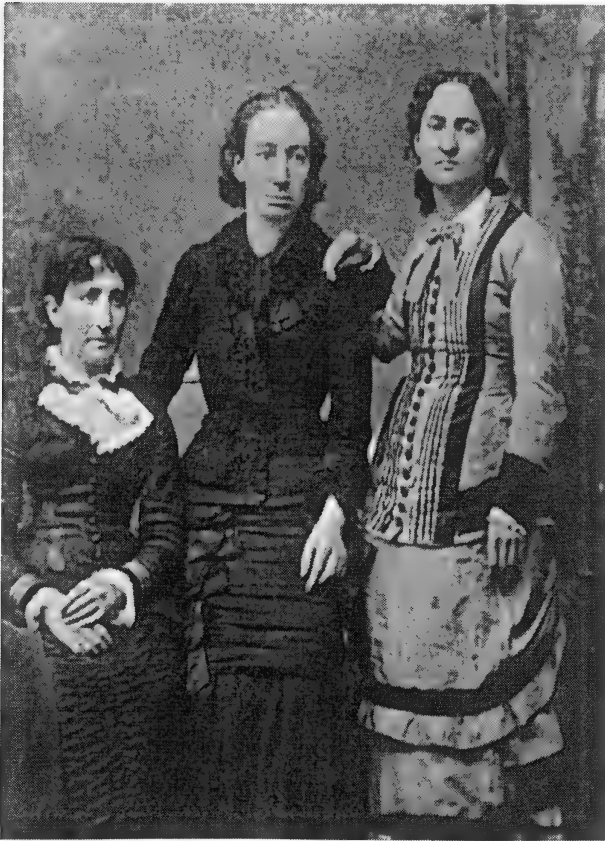
“And she sat herself down with a lighted candle, at the doorway of a room where ammunition was stored.



“She also gathered up the wounded and bandaged them on the battlefield. As in the early days at Vroncourt, her pity extended even to animals: she went under fire to rescue a cat. But she was also an intellectual who was introspective in the midst of action. One night, when she was on guard duty at the Clamart station, with a former pontifical Zouave who had joined the Commune, we overhear this strange dialogue.

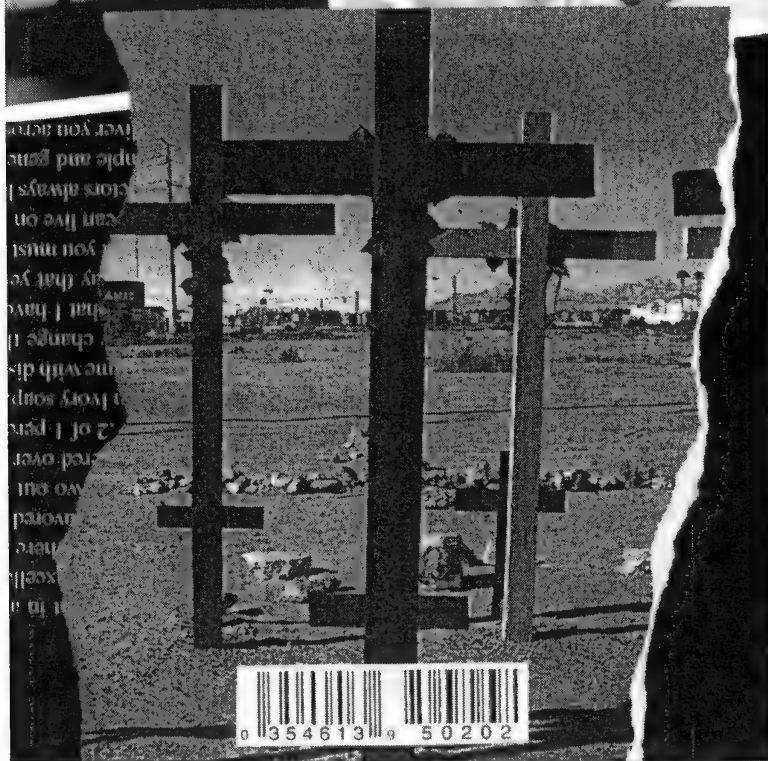
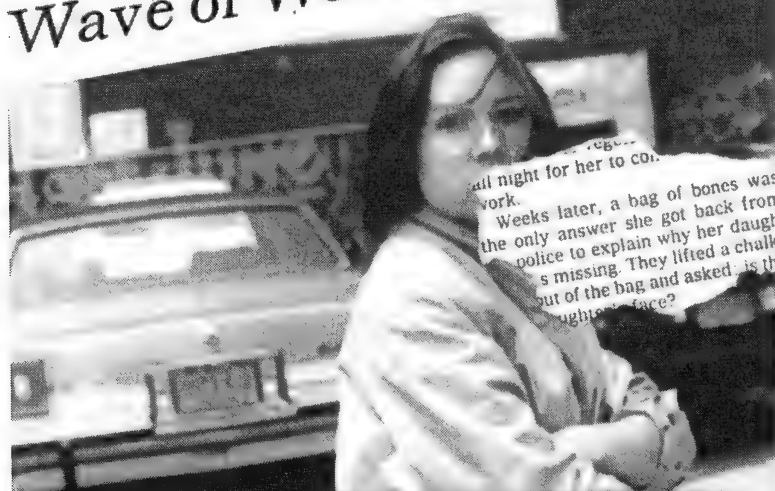
“*What effect is the life you lead having upon you?*’

“*Why, the effect of seeing before us a shore that we must reach,*’ replied Louise Michel.”



Louise Michel and fellow feminist Paule Minck (center and right) - unidentified woman at left

Wave of Women's Killings C



The problems of the white women's movement have much to do with women's unwillingness to admit the centrality of genocide for women's politics.

Even the concept of genocide against women is missing from our minds. We need to keep coming back to this point because we've been conditioned to never figure it out, to keep forgetting about it, to accept the barren aftermath of genocide as what is normal. Look at how women reviewers of Margaret Atwood's novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, spoke respectfully on it as a fictional warning, about how genocide might befall women in some perverted future if today's rising trends continued. But isn't the point that in real life it already happened long ago? It's history, Jane, just history.

What i'm saying is that white women now are only a pale shadow of what women used to be.

And because we haven't broken our bonds to the patriarchy, we still don't know how our world works. Most importantly, we don't yet know how to start an opposing culture of our own. The imperialist patriarchy understands genocide in a scientific way, 'tho they won't cop to it. They have a map & an owner's manual, and have had long experience at operating it. We need an opposing camp of theoretical & practical clarity, which is why key concepts such as "genocide," "property," and "integration" have to be dealt with in a scientific way. We're going to talk about all this.

Genocide is above all else a property relationship. The propaganda that it's an "insane" aberration, a frenzy of racist killing, is untrue. Genocide is a cold deal. It's what's normal in our world. The U.N. has defined genocide as the destruction of a nation or people, either physically or by destruction of their culture. Often the victims survive because their body is needed. But they survive as something else.

Indian women who survived "King Phillip's Rebellion," the first major white settler vs. Indian war in 1675, were mostly sold into slavery to the Jamaican sugar plantations. They didn't live long although their descendants still survive. But not as Indians in what our Gestapo called "New England." As Afrikans in Jamaica. Biological survival of individuals is not the same as the survival of a people, who are a people because they have an identity, a collective personality & culture.

Biologically and socially, those Indian sisters were integrated by capitalism into the West Indian slave economy. Their lineage goes on but not as those specific Indian nations. Isn't that what happened to women as a people? Integrated into the male economy, the male home, the male structures. For property ownership gives the right to split apart & integrate, to reshape & restructure, to use up, disperse & destroy. This is what war is about.

"I've seen the sunset on the mountainside.
Does that mean that I should mourn the day gone by?...
So I say to you today why not end the game we play?
& learn a way to say good-bye."

—little esther

It's only natural that patriarchal imperialism creates the need in us for an opposing culture, whether you think of that as women's culture or revolutionary culture. But our attempts at a culture of our own sputter, flare and never really catch fire, because the minimum standard for a new culture today is that it has to confront the centrality of genocide. Otherwise it's not for real, not going to cut it.

Revolutionary women's culture is usually thought of as uplifting & entertaining, having to do with the creative arts (music, painting, drama, dance, literature, sculpture). Kinda our counter-part to the patriarchal capitalist arts. They have Michael Jackson and the Metropolitan Opera, we have Holly Near and Sweet Honey in the Rock. They got poems by T.S. Eliot, we got poems by Adrienne Rich & Pat Parker. This is misleading.

When i speak here of culture i mean the distinctive characteristic of a stage of civilization or the distinctive way of life of a given society. In that sense, Michael Jackson & Holly Near are both parts of patriarchal imperialist culture. Revolutionary culture isn't something you go to visit (such as a concert) or buy (such as a book). It's much larger than that—which is why no matter how hard you shop or how many concerts you go to you can't get it. It's something you gotta create by living in it—or not. Revolutionary culture is a way of life that counteracts genocide civilization, a different way of seeing & answering problems, a set of productive

& reproductive relationships between people. It's what some call communalism and others call women's liberation. Many haven't found a name for it, it's just a dumb vision in their pain.

While listening to Holly Near may look like women's culture, when it's divorced from the real relationships of Land & Property & Production, it becomes its opposite. Just as Michael Jackson came outta an oppressed culture but is regarded by everyone as a talented entertainer in & for white oppressor culture. This isn't to criticize either entertainer. A Holly Near might sing of Chilean women who produce the fruit we eat, but if that isn't part of an opposing culture that says produce it ourselves or do without, then it's really an acceptance of genocide culture.



An outward show of a separate culture can be & is absorbed into genocide culture, a product that we can buy which makes us feel better about ourselves ("I care about other women, about oppressed people. I'm entertained by their struggles.") although we aren't better people.

We can see this pretty clear when it happens to other people, to Indian cultures, say. We don't think that the tour bus pulling up at "AUTHENTIC INDIAN POW-WOW \$3.00 ADMISSION" constitutes Indian culture. We don't think that robbing indigenous nations of their Land and productive life but having them make rugs & belt buckles for us is building their culture.

When it comes to us we got blinders on, tho. We don't see it'll happen to us, too, without armed struggle, without territory & production. We think women's culture is somehow exempt from all this, but it isn't. We could end up with Adrienne Rich Boulevard and Andrea Dworkin Highway, too. Just as this racist society has Sojourner Truth Elementary School and Malcolm X Blvd. Leaving us with nothing. It's only in going for all of it that you get to keep any of it.



THE SCIENCE OF GENOCIDE

Because we have no scientific understanding of genocide as a culture, no political-military science of our own (we are in fact still so colonized that many of us deny that women should even dare to have such a science), we are totally unable to deal with violence against women. We accept that as normal. But i say that the science of genocide can only be confronted by the science of war. The women's community has a great social analysis of rape, for instance, but hasn't idea one on what to do about it. No tactics, no strategy, no science.

Warning to women

Vancouver police are warning women not to walk alone at night after a 23-year-old woman was sexually assaulted while walking in a park in the 900-block of West 71st Avenue late Wednesday. Police said a man grabbed her from behind, forced her to the ground and assaulted her. He is described as being short to medium in height, weighing 180 to 200 pounds, and wore a nylon-type jacket and blue jeans.

... i'm interested in this, in the ineffectiveness of anything white women have done about rape. Why nobody thinks it's odd. To me that's so strange it really stands out. A sister who did support work for rape survivors later said: "Once when I was speaking to a large group of women about ending rape, someone asked me if I really believed that rape could be ended in my lifetime. Silenced for a moment, I replied that even if I didn't live long enough, perhaps my daughters would be free from male violence someday." She was brought up short because she didn't know what to say. Obviously, it had never occurred to her that she'd ever see an end to rape. And nobody thinks it's odd.

Proof in science is defined as the ability to predict (& hence to use in practice), whether it's about the stresses distributed along an airplane wing or the evolution in the relationship of nations. So we have a backed up mountain of good insights about rape, but no scientific understanding yet. We're stalled because our practical thinking has to be kicked still deeper into the heart of our fears:

"To be radical is to go to the root." Rape can't be fully understood by itself, because it is a function of something larger—genocide.

Genocide deals with gender. That's the first thing we have to put down to replace the Hollywood cliché of genocide as only a police roundup in the night. It's true that the Indian nations were destroyed so that white settlers could steal their land to put up "America the beautiful from sea to shining sea." But when we break down how the process worked we see how much it centered on women, how it used gender & how rape was introduced to this continent as part of the process. i want to trace this example, since it's so much a part of us.

For much of the first century of white invasion, the small settler communities lived off of selling Indian women. Not only to support themselves, but to get the capital to buy the Afrikan slaves that would become the economic foundation of all whitelife. Genocide, after all, isn't an irrational "mad minute" but a vast economic activity. It must pay for itself & yield profits. Just as the butchering & looting of millions of women "Witches" did for the patriarchy in europe from the 13th to the 18th centuries. Just as the mass looting of Jewish homes, shops and businesses was like winning the lottery to many law-abiding German women.

Settler men from Massachusetts down to Florida led bloody raids to kill all Indian men, wipe out those communities & occupy their lands, while paying for this war effort not with u.s. savings bonds but by enslaving & marching off all the Indian women and children they could find. In the colonial era hundreds of thousands of Indian women & children became white property. Since Indian men were considered too risky to hold as P.O.W.s, most were massacred. While most Indian women & children P.O.W.s were sold to the West Indian slave plantations & a quick but profitable extinction. We built not only "New" York and "New" Jersey and "New" England," but "New" Auschwitz, too.

Throughout the early colonial amerikkka, Indian slave women labored in the fields & in the homes. In New York the settler government had to pass futile resolutions in the 1680s that peaceful Indians "are free and not slaves," because white men were simply taking Indian women & children for "lifetime servants" when they found them unarmed. In 1730 a census of Kingston, Rhode Island, found that the community owned 220 Indian women and children & 330 Afrikans. We can imagine the satisfaction that white men

had, not only wiping out Indian communities but paying for it by having Indian women as their property to do with as they pleased.

It was in the South, the Carolinas and Florida, that the slave trade in Indian women & children was most bloody. For the Southern Indian nations and peoples were more numerous than those along the New England and Mid-Atlantic coast. North Carolina & South Carolina were founded as white settlements on the traffic in Indian women. In North Carolina's war against the Tuscarora all the settler armies were led by slave traders, and were in fact slave-raiding parties. One led by the veteran slaver James Moore is described this way:

“Storming the Tuscarora fort at Nooherooka in March 1713, they soundly defeated the North Carolina tribe. Several hundred of the enemy were burned alive in the fort; 166 male captives regarded as unsuitable for slavery were slaughtered; and 392 Tuscaroras, mostly women and children, were led back to the Charleston slave-market.”

Those Charleston slave merchants themselves touched off the Yamasee war in 1715, when they began the policy of seizing & auctioning off Yamasee women and children to pay debts for rum allegedly incurred by Yamasee men. Already the slaver Thomas Moore had extended his raids into Spanish Florida in 1704. In only six years after that, South Carolina settlers had captured some 10,000 to 12,000 women & children of the Timucas, Guales, and Apalachees in Florida for the busy Charleston slave market.

Were the small numbers of white settler men able to defeat far larger Indian populations because of more advanced european weapons & military organization? No, our invading euro-capitalism committed genocide with the weapon of war *and* the weapon of capitalist culture. Drawing Indian nations and peoples into its commodity civilization as addicts & property. Arming as many Indian men with guns as they could. Addicting as many Indians to rum and other trade goods as they could. Decade after decade, in a protracted war that was called something else. To get these commodities they'd become addicted to & protect their own safety, Indian men cooperated with the settlers in warring for Indian women of other nations.

Most of the fighting & capturing was done, in fact, by *Indian* men. In James Moore's 1713 expedition against the Tuscarora, for instance, he had only 33 white colonists with him but a large force of 900 Cherokees, Yamasees, Creeks, and Catawbas. More often the settlers lay back & bribed Indian nation to attack Indian nation until both were decimated.

In explaining the triumph of small numbers of settlers in destroying Indian civilization in the area we call South Carolina, one author says:

"By 1717 a white population of only about 1,500 males had succeeded in employing the larger tribes to enslave and shatter nearly a dozen coastal tribes and then had driven a wedge between the Creeks and the Cherokees at the moment when an alliance between them might have ended English presence in the region. Throughout this process, covering almost half a century, the primary weapon of the English had been trade goods."



In this process, rape as we know it, as an ever-present fact of life for women & a major structure of society, was introduced to this continent. Many indigenous peoples say that in their traditions they didn't even have the concept of rape. I've been told that in the whole period 1620 to 1776 there is not one case of a settler woman being raped by Indian men. But if settler men freely raped and used the bodies of their Afrikan women slaves, as we know they did, then why should we think it any different for Indian women?

Christopher Columbus, in his official reports to his royal patrons, naturally makes no mention of rape. He and his men did capture seven Indian women for the return trip to Spain, purely for chaste reasons he assured Queen Isabella. None of the seven lived to reach Europe. On his second trip in November 1493, his ship captured an Indian woman on the island of St. Croix. We know this

only because he gave her as a gift to a friend on the ship, Michael de Cuneo, who wrote about it in his account of the voyage. *"I wanted to have my pleasure of her,"* de Cuneo wrote, but she fought him off fiercely, lacerating his face. But after he beat and lashed his prisoner into submission, de Cuneo concluded with satisfaction, *"I don't mind telling you that she seemed to have been raised in a school for whores."* **i think it's fitting that Columbus Day is an amerikkkan national holiday—only shouldn't we call it Rapist Day?**

A 1715 report from a Virginia Indian slave trader to his London agent mentions the rapes of Indian women during his expeditions. The London proprietors of the South Carolina colony rebuked the settlement's traders in writing for their infamous practices, starting with rape:

"...to ravish the wife from the Husband, Kill the father to get the Child and to burne and Destroy the habitations of these poore people into whose Country wee were Cheerfully received by them, cherished and supplied when wee are weak, or at least never have done us hurt."

Almost thirty years ago our women's movement began identifying rape as an institution of political terrorism of the oppressed by the oppressor. **We said that rape is to women as lynching is to Black people.** It was economically important back in 1900s Alabama that most New Afrikans would not be lynched. What was also important was that the ever-present threat of lynching over them all, of a sudden mob hunt & brutalization & ritual white murder of a Black colonial subject, was a constant pressure to conform to all the rules of behavior for the property that you were. Same with women & rape. When those settler men raped Indian women & children P.O.W.s they were branding them as property while getting their rocks off. Trying to terrorize them to suppress resistance. The personal is very political.

The genocide which began with the smaller Indian tribes of the coastal areas grew into the Removal Act of 1830, during the administration of the populist slaveowner president Andrew Jackson. The Removal Act ordered that lands East of the Mississippi River

be sterilized of all Indian nations and peoples. While many small groups of Indians hid out & survived in dense forests and swamplands (the Seminole in Florida waged a 30-year guerrilla war that eventually forced the u.s. to let them stay), most were moved out West by the gestapo. On the infamous Trail of Tears the captive Cherokee Nation, marching under duress through the winter of 1838 without food or winter clothing, lost one-third of its people en route.

Then, too, the genocide was centered on women. President Andrew Jackson angrily told his gestapo to finish the business by killing Indian women as their main target. We didn't hear that in men's history classes or even in women's studies. No wonder in the 1990s we still had confused people saying that you can do genocide by killing *men*. Supposedly, "An endangered species." No, to end a nation or people you gotta kill the *women*; that's obvious biological fact and cultural fact as well. Genocide has gender.

Segregation, the removal of all Eastern Indian survivors to koncentration kamps called something else, was a move in a long, protracted 200-year process of genocide. But so was *integration*, for even way back then there were loving white men promoting the idea of peaceful togetherness of Indian and white. Indian women, of course.

u.s. president Thomas Jefferson proposed integration as a final solution to the dwindling Indian nations. In his negotiations with the Mohicans, Munries & Delawares, Jefferson urged them to stop being so communal & join settlers in the property religion of euro-capitalism:

"When once you have property, you will want laws and magistrates to protect your property and persons, and to punish those among you who commit crimes. You will find our laws are good for this purpose; you will wish to live under them, you will unite yourselves with us, join in our Great Councils and form one people with us, and we shall all be Americans; you will mix with us by marriage, your blood will run in our veins, and will spread with us over this great land."

u.s. president Jefferson favored the total extermination of all New Afrikans on this continent, starting with the children; believing that white men would never be safe otherwise (a view that's more popular now than ever). But when it came to Indians he wanted *integration*. This was consistent. Privately, Jefferson wrote his envoys that any Indians who refused to join "*will be wiped out to the last person.*" Notice he said "person" and not "man." i mean, our Founding Fathers were real pros in the business of genocide. That's what their main business was as a society. Same today with us.

When Jefferson was proposing intermarriage & Indians' biological cross-over with white society, he sure wasn't talking about his granddaughter getting down with Crazy Horse. No, no, we can be sure of that! What he meant was that Indian women should become sexually more available to white men, that their daughters' bodies should be available to white men, and so on until Indians vanished.

To this day, white men have a fantasy love affair with Indian women. Indians joke that every other white man they meet says that their great-grandmother was an Indian princess. In public school, did we learn about the many Indian sisters who were extraordinary for their strength & independence, but who were part of societies where that was normal? Nope. We learned about Pocahontas, who supposedly loved white men so much she saved Capt. John Smith's life. That's the only thing i can remember they taught us about Indian women—how much (just like us) they supposedly loved white men. And isn't that what the rapist always says afterwards? "*She loved it.*" "*She wanted me to do it.*" "*It's her fault.*"



When did genocide against Indian nations and peoples end? Doesn't seem to me that it's ever ended, but i'll let Indian sisters answer that. What i do know is that the process centered on Indian women & children is still alive inside us.

Last night i was flipping through an old issue of the feminist journal *New Directions for Women*, and there was Lynn Wenzel's "Westward the Women." A composite review of seven books on frontier white women. She's into this story because it's her family's, too: "Proudly, my grandmothers and great aunts kept alive the memories and exploits of the hardy pioneer women who settled this country..." She tells us:

"My great-great-grandmother Annie Carr was living in Arizona in the early 1870s. One morning she saw dust and heard hoofbeats and realized Geronimo's band of marauders were approaching her homestead. Pregnant Annie grabbed her children. Terrorized, they hid in the root cellar... Only later did I come to understand what terrible treacheries had made a renegade out of a warrior."

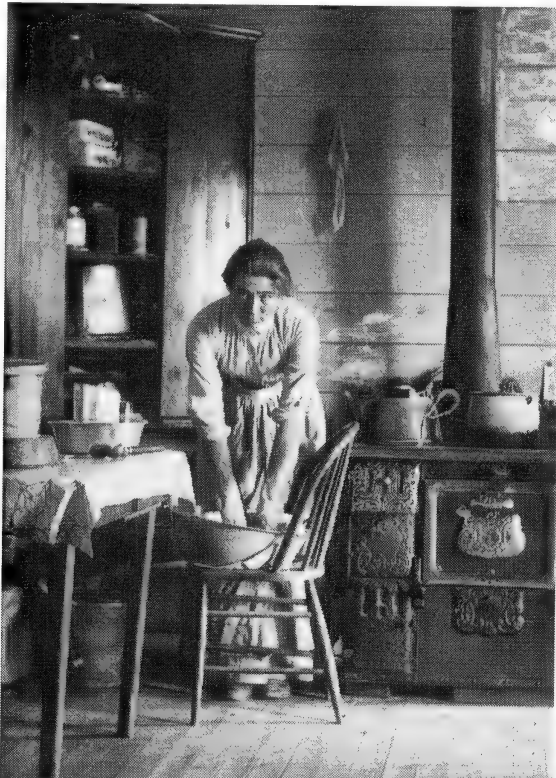


i think that's a pretty average point of view for us: pride in our white foremothers & forgiveness for those Indians who got hostile at it all. But what was it like from *women's* point of view (as opposed to a *white* point of view), this Arizona frontier of the 1870s? And what were the things unnamed that turned Geronimo into a "renegade"? From a history book:

"More than anything else, it was probably the incessant kidnapping and enslavement of their women and children that gave Apaches their mad-dog enmity toward the whites... It was officially estimated that 2,000 Indian slaves were held by the white people of New Mexico and Arizona in 1866, after 20 years of

American rule—unofficial estimates placed the figure several times higher... ‘Get them back for us,’ Apaches begged an Army officer in 1871, referring to 29 children just stolen by citizens of Arizona; ‘our boys will grow up as slaves, and our little girls, as soon as they are large enough, will be diseased prostitutes, to get money for whoever owns them...’ Prostitution of captured Apache girls, of which much mention is made in the 1860s and 1870s, seemed to trouble the Apaches exceedingly.”

Do you think the settler women in that small frontier community didn’t know what was happening? Of course they knew. When the menfolk are laughing about what they did to the Indian girl yesterday while you’re cooking their supper, of course you know. How could you not, as a woman? It must have burned in your guts, that anger & fear of knowing.



To be a *renegade* is to be a traitor, a turncoat, a person who abandons their principles or people for another. Geronimo and his small band of freedom fighters were not that. But there were people there who had changed their principles and people for another. There were people whose only life was to help white men build the community of rape & enslavement of “other” women and children. And if today we’re proud of what they did, see them as brave models of what we should be—then what is our culture?

The point is we don’t have a culture of our own yet. We have a role inside white men’s culture; we have a niche inside patriarchal imperialism. It wasn’t only Indians and Afrikans who were property, after all. When euro-capitalism invaded this continent, the settler men brought with them their most “precious” property, the white women that would be their homes, be available for sex, and that would produce their own children. In return for being so useful in euro-capitalism’s Big House, settler women got to share in a higher standard of living than we had back in poverty-stricken old europe.

If we can see that many Indian men were lured by fear, addiction and social bribery into taking part in their own destruction, we should be able to see even better that the most important group being socially bribed to take part in genocide were and are white women.

That’s why we blank out of our minds the systematic rape & slavery of Indian and Afrikan women in genocide. We feel proud of the pioneer white women who were serving the rapists and slavers. Oh, and the imperialist patriarchy still owns us so deeply that we truly believe these sick attitudes are “feminism.”

But it isn’t just bribery in the material sense. We, too, are kept as property by terrorism. Every Indian woman or child raped & enslaved back then was also a terrorizing example for settler women. A real threat, like the burning of “Witches” was. Like Death Squads are. Like women’s prisons are. We are conditioned to be loyal to dick’s genocide, to never see anything or say anything. *Or else.* Like that German aryan woman (our closest sis) who listened to those cattlecars full of Jews going by in the night, but never ever knew anything. ’Cause it might be the them in the cattlecar, their daughter being raped, them in the koncentration kamp. We know dick will turn on “his” women in a flash if he feels threatened or

betrayed or just for the hell of it. So we are used to purchasing our flimsy piece of temporary safety with our conformity to all his rules for the property that we are. That's why we back down so often.

When we were culturally sterilized in genocide we lost much of what women are. Because when you become property you aren't what you were, you're made to become something else. *That's the idea.* Just as the livestock in the agri-factory are not even biologically anymore the wild & free animals they once were. i use this comparison deliberately. Now "women" has been redefined in us. "Women" are fearful, weak, possible victims of rape & other attack at any time. Always calculating whether it's safe to wear this, walk there, or say that. That is what's normal to us. "Women" have no community, but live & work completely split up within the community of men. That's been made normal to us. "Women" cannot decisively defend ourselves either with fight or flight, unlike most beasts on the face of the earth. "Women" are not allowed territory, and by custom & law cannot patrol, curfew, or bar men out. That's all normal to us. What we think is not normal is being Amazons.

Rebellious women have so often been the foundation, at the center, of anti-imperialist revolution. This is natural and, in fact, inevitable. For who should be drawn to armed liberation more than the most oppressed? Women's Liberation has always been an armed thing, and involves the overthrow of the three pillars of the existing order: the ruling class, the ruling nations, and the ruling gender. Women's Liberation was the world's first revolutionary trend. It is still today the most radical and dangerous in the eyes of men.

And we still don't know how dangerous we have to be.



Rosa Parks is a woman that everyone thinks they know about. In one day she made Civil Rights history by her act of deliberate defiance on the evening of December 1, 1955, when she refused to yield her seat on a segregated Montgomery, Alabama bus. Now schoolchildren all over amerikkka are taught about her.

In 1990, she was celebrated at a giant "black tie and gown" benefit dinner for her foundation. 3,000 affluent people, from congresswomen to university presidents, came to pay tribute. Cicely Tyson was the m.c., while Dionne Warwick and Lou Rawls sang. Cyril Neville of the Neville Brothers performed a song composed in her honor: *"Thank you, Miss Rosa/ You are the spark/ That started our Freedom movement."*

So lofty is her place in history that even the racist *Washington Post* threw uncommon praise upon her.

"But, as the parade of stars and social leaders said loudly and clearly during the celebration last night of Rosa Park's 77th birthday at the Kennedy Center, her defiance was such a powerful catalyst for the civil rights movement that the grand status of matriarch is hers alone."



Yet & again, how many women pay tribute to the *other* Black women who really did what Rosa Parks is famous for? Long before December 1, 1955, the New Afrikan community in Montgomery, Alabama had seethed under the public humiliation not only of being segregated in the back of the bus, but of having to yield their seats on demand to white passengers. Segregation, which was only an outward form of colonialism, was not merely a seating plan. New Afrikans were attacked and degraded everyday on the buses. It was common for the white bus drivers to contemptuously throw transfers on the floor, so that Black passengers had to get down to pick them up. Or bypass bus stops with waiting New Afrikans on rainy days because the drivers said they were "wet and smelly".



Black women who didn't act slavish enough or who snuck into "white" seats were called names like "Black bitch", "heifers", "nigger whore" (isn't it a measure of how successful capitalism's genocide program is that many Black men are proud to degrade Black women using the language first invented by the most racist white men?). Those New Afrikans who resisted were beaten up and arrested—or, in one 1952 case involving a drunk man who talked back, taken off the bus by police and executed right on the spot.

New Afrikan women were pushing the matter to a confrontation. There were more individual cases of spontaneous defiance. In 1953, Mrs. Epsie Worthy refused a bus driver's demand that she pay an additional fare before leaving the bus, and then had to defend herself when he came at her with his fists swinging. In the punch-up, she more than held her own, but had to surrender when the police

came. The Women's Political Council, which had three chapters of one hundred members each (their size limit so that members of each group could really know each other), had started compiling individual complaints and planning a bus boycott. It was the Black women of the W.P.C. —schoolteachers, college employees, church activists, nurses—who later in 1955 were to issue the actual call for the Bus Boycott, secretly preparing and anonymously mass distributing thousands of leaflets to mobilize the community.

On March 2, 1955—eight months before Rosa Parks got arrested—a Montgomery bus driver on the Dexter Avenue line ordered four Black women to give up their seats so that whites could sit down. Two obeyed, but two pretended not to hear him. He called for the police, who got one Black man to stand up and give his seat to one of the two holdouts. But the last Black woman, who was pregnant, refused to budge and was arrested. Handcuffed, resisting, crying & cursing at the police, she was dragged from the bus.*

* By then, the Black men on the bus had quickly gotten off and split, lest they be arrested, too. This was a pattern, where the anti-colonial confrontation expressed itself as New Afrikan women against the white colonial order. Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, the president of the Women's Political Council and the person who wrote the leaflet that began the Montgomery Bus Boycott, said in her memoirs:

"The number of Negro men walking increased during 1954 and early 1955. They walked to and from work, to town, to movies, to see their girlfriends, because of fear at riding the buses. At no time did a single man ever stand up in defense of the women. Although it hurt to be called 'coward,' perhaps they were cowards, except for the very few men who challenged authority and paid the price. For at first hint of conflict, the men left at the nearest exit. They didn't dare to challenge the bus operators, who possessed police powers. The men feared arrest and did not expect to get justice in the courts. They had wives and children and could not afford to lose their jobs or go to jail. If they were on the bus when trouble started, they merely got up and got off. Or they avoided getting on the bus in the first place..."

The New Afrikan community leadership, including the ministers and the Women's Political Council, quickly began exploring this as a test case to mobilize a concerted attack on colonialism. After much discussion, E. D. Nixon, the patriarch of the Alabama locals of the Sleeping Car Porters Union and Montgomery's main civil rights leader, decided against it. The woman was not respectable enough, he judged. She was "immature", a high school student, rowdy and defiant, and—worst of all—she was preg without being married. Nixon decided the battle had to wait until there was a more respectable defendant.

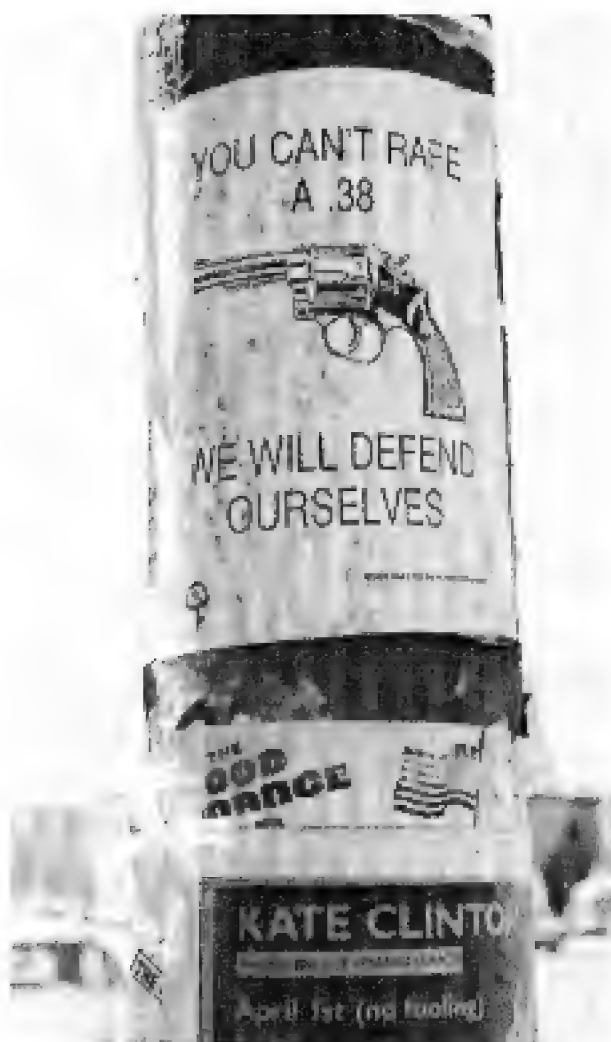
In October of that same year, a second New Afrikan woman refused a white bus driver's order to give up her seat to a white woman, and was arrested. Again, New Afrikan women got ready to launch the long-awaited struggle. But, once again, E. D. Nixon decided that the sister who resisted wasn't a good enough woman. That time his objection was that the young woman was too low-class. Angry and poor, she lived with her alcoholic father in a shack outside the city.

There was dissent at this thinking among New Afrikan women, especially from the Women's Political Council. They started saying that the issue wasn't how "respectable" any arrested Black woman was, but putting colonialism itself on trial. Freedom was the issue, they said, and Nixon and other men should realize that. Under criticism, unable to stall any longer, E. D. Nixon finally turned to his closest supporter in the local

NA.A.C.P. She was a "respectable" woman by his standards: employed at a skilled trade, not too poor, an N.A.A.C.P. officer and the supervisor for the city's N.A.A.C.P. Youth Council. Her name was Rosa Parks.



It takes nothing away from Rosa Parks' courage and years of dedication to see that she was not the first, not the catalyst, but instead was the symbol reluctantly chosen by men for a struggle that *other* New Afrikan woman had already started months and even years before. It was fighting women, who weren't "respectable", who were "too hot, too Black" for the men of the civil rights movement, who first broke the chains and opened the way. Not just in Montgomery, but all over New Afrika. Now unknown, on purpose not by accident. Why not call them X?



Because men are saying now that they know who X is. That in the equations of life "X" now stands for the known. When Public Enemy raps about X the listeners know that's Malcolm. When Spike Lee wears his black cap with the white "X", we know he means Malcolm. On one level that's no problem. On another level, though, isn't it true that in mathematics X always stands for the Unknown? That's why many thousands of New Afrikans (not just one person who started life as Malcolm Little and ended taking the name El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz) called themselves X. In place of their true family names, lost long ago in the slave ships and the auction block.

To me, X is still the Unknown. Now, more than ever, the oppressed are X, the unseen Power who have yet to truly name themselves and define themselves. And who more so than women? Like in that movie, *"Full Metal Jacket"*, where at the surprise conclusion the unseen Vietnamese sniper who's been systematically picking off most of a Marine platoon lost in a burning city during the 1968 Tet offensive, is revealed to be... a young woman. The Marines on the screen and the real life audience in their seats were both caught off guard. In the movie, as in life, amerikkka had no name for her.

The role might have been based on the legendary Vietnamese woman sniper who in real life commanded a sniper squad that completely terrorized u.s. Marines from the 26th regiment, on Hill 55 up in I corps. This unknown Amazon sister, who the amerikkkan grunts naturally called "Apache woman", so demoralized them that men were dodging going out on patrol. Of course, Marine intelligence officers swore that any woman who could keep killing them so smoothly had to be emotionally disturbed. One young white lieutenant told the press: "This woman has some sort of sexual problem concerning men—she hates them." Gotta love that.



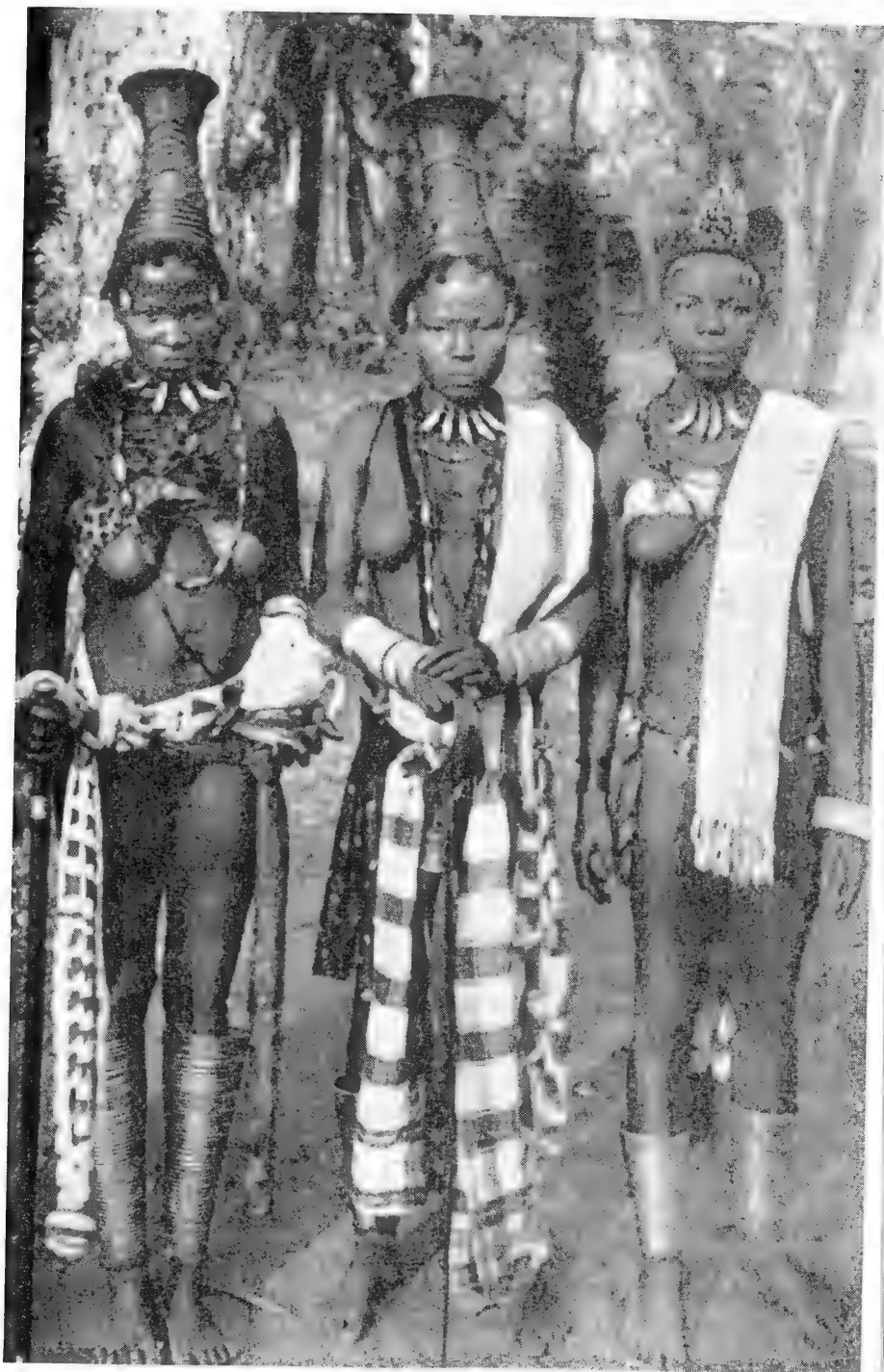
They claim their own snipers finally killed "Apache woman" in an ambush, but whether it was that Amazon or another peasant woman in anonymous black pants and shirt, we don't know. Call her X.

We can laugh at dick, so resentfully confused when an Amazon kicks his butt, but don't white women share those same values? i just read a book by a lesbian-feminist former editor of *Ms* magazine, saying basically the same things that white Marine lieutenant did: women guerrillas are emotionally messed-up and unwomanly. Even this lesbian former editor of *Ms* thinks like her rapist white brothers do. That's why you don't know who you are.

That's why i get so angry at the colonized fantasies of so many white middle-class feminists, that we should simply wish ourselves back to those ancient non-violent matriarchies or non-conflictual communal bands. That using uzis or building a clandestine liberation culture is "playing men's game", is "using tools of the patriarchy."

Let me say it better so it really is in plain sight: If women could have non-violently stopped genocide they would have. Do you think that we're so much smarter & tougher than those Afrikan women and Indian women? They did the very best they could, protected their sisters & children the best they knew how. Don't dismiss our sisters so lightly. Peaceful non-military societies cannot stand up to predatory societies. It didn't work the first time around, when our women's science & abilities were much more developed and our enemy was much weaker than he is today. And we, too, need the weapon of culture. And the weapon of war.





Igbo Women, 1920



there's fighting in Iraq but The Real Women's War is in Afrika

Amazons need a different viewpoint of our own on world reality, and it has to be a *military* viewpoint. If someone isn't waving a gun, women don't think it's military. But patriarchal capitalism doesn't see it that way. With a wink and a nod, they know that in their world it *all* can be military—whether we are told to call it economics, nation-building, recreation or health.

Right now people are seeing by the light of burning cities in the Middle East that it isn't about terrorism and it isn't even about oil, so much as it is about the Bush Gang's plan to *restructure* the entire Middle East. To occupy, police, rip apart and modernize Muslim nations along certain lines to better integrate them into global capitalism. And millions have been protesting in the streets.

But they've *already* done that to Afrika (and no women here were in the streets). This is a done deal. World capitalism covertly restructured Afrika over the past fifteen years first through endemic men's civil wars sponsored by the NATO powers and then through the massive genocide of women. The genocide that they called "a health problem". Biological warfare has already been committed on a continental scale, but it wasn't any pipsqueak Saddam in Baghdad. It was the big boys, the U.S. empire and NATO and the U.N., that are the war criminals. Check out this stunning admission & explanation of Afrika's crisis by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan:

"A combination of famine and AIDS is threatening the backbone of Africa—the women who keep African societies going and whose work makes up the economic foundation of rural communities. For decades, we have known that the best way for Africa to thrive is to ensure that its women have the freedom, power and knowledge to make decisions affecting their own lives and those of their families and

communities. At the United Nations, we have always understood that our work depends on building a successful partnership with the African farmer and her husband...

"But today, millions of African women are threatened by two simultaneous catastrophes: famine and AIDS. More than 30 million people are now at risk of starvation in southern Africa and the Horn of Africa. All of these predominately rural societies are also battling serious AIDS epidemics. This is no coincidence: AIDS and famine are directly linked.

"Because of AIDS, farming skills are being lost, agricultural development efforts are declining, rural livelihoods are disintegrating, productive capacity to work the land is dropping and household earnings are shrinking—all while the cost of caring for the ill is rising exponentially. At the same time, HIV infection and AIDS are spreading dramatically and disproportionately among women. A United Nations report released last month shows that women now make up 50 percent of those infected with HIV worldwide—and in Africa that figure is now 58 percent. Today, AIDS has a woman's face.

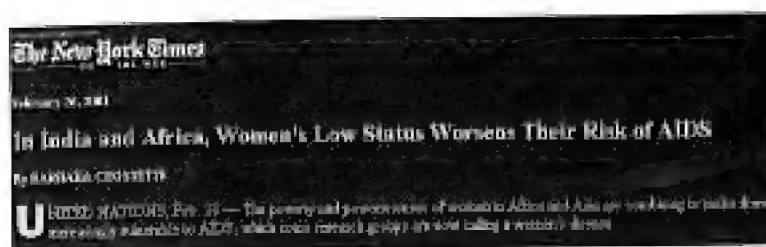


"AIDS has already caused immense suffering by killing almost 2.5 million Africans this year alone. It has left 11 million African children orphaned since the epidemic began. Now it is attacking the capacity of these countries to resist famine by eroding those mechanisms that enable populations to fight back—the coping abilities provided by women.

"In famines before the AIDS crisis, women proved more resilient than men. Their survival rate was higher, and their coping skills were stronger. Women were the ones who found alternative foods that could sustain their children in times of drought. Because droughts happened once a decade or so, women who had experienced previous droughts were able to pass on survival techniques to younger women. Women are the ones who nurture social networks that can help spread the burden in times of famine...

"Because this crisis is different from past famines, we must look beyond relief measures of the past. Merely shipping in food is not enough. Our effort will have to combine food assistance and new approaches to farming with treatment and prevention of HIV and AIDS... It will require new agricultural techniques, appropriate to a depleted work force. It will require a renewed effort to wipe out HIV-related stigma and silence... Above all, this new international effort must put women at the center of our strategy to fight AIDS."

U.N. chief Kofi Annan, suave and slick as a deodorant commercial, says that he is supporting Afrikan women in their terrible crisis (that he for one helped create). But under that guise what he is *really* saying is that since these millions upon millions of Afrikan women are dead & dying, their role is over. Their day as the main farmers of Afrika is over, and now Afrikan society must be restructured in a more "modern" way—i.e. a patriarchal imperialist way.



Notice that the U.N. chieftain doesn't discuss when the international agencies first got involved in the AIDS pandemic among Afrikan women.

Fact is that for well over ten years they've been observing & monitoring the explosion of this genocide through bio-warfare (in many areas over 25% of adult Afrikan women are HIV Positive). In those years the U.N. aided in the u.s. empire's Gulf War with Iraq. The dicks flew thousands of troops into the Balkans to occupy large parts of ex-Yugoslavia. To say nothing of the u.s. conquest of Afghanistan, or the French and British military incursions to prop up corrupt regimes in Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast and other neo-colonies. No end of global interventions.

But accidentally-on-purpose there was no intervention to stop the AIDS pandemic among women in Afrika. Even after the mass fear of AIDS in white middle class amerikkka led to a dramatic medical offensive, new therapies and government-sponsored roadblocks against the spread of AIDS in Smallville. But not in Black Afrika, and most of all not for Afrikan women.

For over ten years they knew but did nothing, day in & day out, this cold collection of men's capitalist governments. Because they knew that to reverse the AIDS explosion in Afrika they needed to empower women. (Rather than have societies run crazily off the rails by the Mugabes and Mbekis). We don't even need to have shaky conspiracy theories alleging CIA experiments in Afrika out of control or something. The bourgeoisie and their major institutions knew about the pandemic for over ten years, but did nothing. This wasn't a "health" decision, this was a *military* decision. After all, if the German Nazis had decided that all Jewish children would not have medical care or adequate food—and then watched as they died—would we have said that it was a "health" problem or would we have called it genocide? Afrika was the real bio-warfare, not

Iraq and its two-bit laboratories and isolated little dictator. When they point us in one direction, we should know that the real deal is the other way.

What Annan was referring to is that in many Afrikan rural societies the subsistence farming that feeds families is largely done by women and children. Women *are* the local social structure, in many senses. Men work in the cash economy, often leaving their village for long periods, or often don't work at all. Annan is saying that with the deliberately unchecked AIDS not only the labor power but the traditional knowledge and skills are being lost. As he says, *"Merely shipping in food is not enough. Our effort will have to combine food assistance with new approaches to farming...It will require new agricultural techniques, appropriate to a depleted work force."*

What he means is a version of Western-style, mechanized, biotech commercial farming. With lots of imported corporate products, fertilizers, insecticides, genetically altered seeds, and petroleum-powered equipment. Very "productive"... for some men. Because once farming leaves the zone of women's production for family consumption and becomes commercial, part of the cash economy, it transfers to the zone of men's economy. Fact is that it's bourgeois men who get the land titles and bank loans and commercial contracts.

It is not just the immediate deaths. This U.N. sponsored restructuring is a *military* strategy to wipe out Afrikan women's role in rural society, to modernize Afrika not in a liberated way but along imperialist lines to be a better gear in the emerging global capitalist machinery.

The U.N. chief issued his statement just as those noted humanitarians, the Bush Gang, were also announcing an unprecedented \$15 billion aid plan to put AIDS in Afrika back in the box. The amerikkan public has been puzzled by this contradiction. But looking at it from *Amazons' military* viewpoint it all fits. They give the big dollars and rally the forces *after* the slaughter has done its work, *after* they've won their covert war that they called peace. Now they want to stabilize the surviving employees and tidy up Afrika's house for the new owners.

The genocide against women is not just something long ago, so distant like a faint star that we can safely memorialize it on that one night a year that we celebrate women—if that. The greatest illusion women have is in the safety & stability of our permitted little lives, our little careers, our “small world” as Adolf Hitler fondly called the lives of women. As if staying within the legal boundaries of the sheep pen means that patriarchal capitalism will not move against us. As if men keep their word.

Figure it out—the greatest mass crimes are always said to be something else, always done under cover. Hitler ran a model concentration camp in the 1930s, even with a showcase Jewish orchestra and art classes, for the International Red Cross and foreign journalists to visit and falsely reassure the world about the fate of the Jews. When they burned millions of us at the stake over centuries in the Witchhunt, it was called “religion”. When the indigenous peoples of Hispaniola and Central America were conquered and slaughtered and starved to death by the millions, it was called “Discovering the New World.” When the u.s. invasion turned Saigon into a giant brothel, with 400,00 refugee women forced into being prostitutes to serve GIs, it was called “R & R”.

And when millions of Afrikan women are being killed to wipe out an inconvenient women’s economy that’s standing in the way of global capitalist integration, it’s called a “health problem”.

To the zippers it’s all about military, no matter what else they pretend to call it. And it should be for Amazons, too. But in the metropolis women like to play the game ’cause it pays off for us. “U.S.” only means us. After all, until we get off we ride up & down with the zipper.



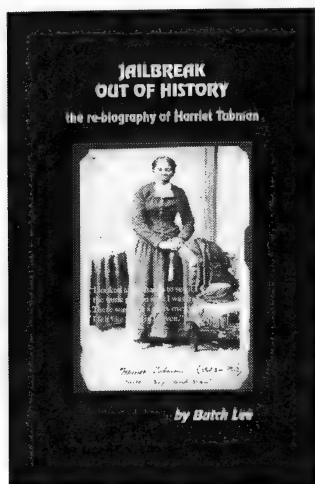
TO BE CONTINUED...

We know that these chapters end here very abruptly. They were originally published in the Amazon journal *Bottomfish Blues* in the 1980s (which has since ceased publishing), and for years only the original three chapters were circulated informally as photocopies. While they temporarily ended here, the author had decided to take a sideways step & the theme of women making revolutionary change on a world scale was taken up by her in the book *NIGHT-VISION* in 1993. It was only recently that the Amazon thread of *The Military Strategy...* was taken up again with chapter 4 of this series, which has been published as a separate booklet under the title *Jailbreak Out Of History: the re-biography of Harriet Tubman*. We encourage you to check out both the book *NIGHT-VISION: Illuminating War & Class on the Neo-colonial Terrain* and *JAILBREAK*, chapter 4 of *The Military Strategy of Women and Children*. Both are available from Kersplebedeb in Canada and Stoop Sale Books in the u.s. (see inside front cover for addresses).

RECOMMENDED READING

Jailbreak out of History

the re-biography of Harriet Tubman



This is a major biographical study, which refutes the standard "American" version of Harriet Tubman's life. At a time when violence against women of color is at the center of world politics, uncovering the censored story of one Amazon points to answers that have nothing to do with government programs, police, or patriarchal politics.

Chapter four in Butch Lee's *The Military Strategy of Women and Children* series.

\$8.75 Cdn/\$5.75 US

Think about Harriet Tubman. Take six months. In fact, take a year & think. Break it on down. What does it mean to be the most famous New Afrikan woman in u.s. history? What does it mean to be stuck in that lie? What's the meaning of being famous while being hidden and disfigured and dissed? Let's jailbreak Harriet Tubman out of white his-story and place her in Amazon and New Afrikan herstory. Her story, her peoples' story.

Harriet Tubman's life is a live weapon placed in our minds, showing us what it means to be an Amazon. Which is why the capitalist patriarchy has forbidden us to touch it for so long. In this, maybe for the first time, we can see Amazons as a future force in the clash of peoples & nations. Not as myths, but as players in the whole difficult course of world politics. We can also appreciate the bittersweet tang of reality, as the peeling away of layers of propaganda and disfigurement which have hidden Harriet from us exposes how much we assume and how little we've known.

AVAILABLE FROM KERSPLEBEDEB AND STOOPSALe BOOKS
SEE INSIDE FRONT COVER FOR ADDRESSES

RECOMMENDED READING

Night-Vision: Illuminating War & Class on the Neo-Colonial Terrain, by Butch Lee & Red Rover

The transformation to a neo-colonial world has only begun, but it promises to be as dramatic, as disorienting a change as was the original european colonial conquest of the human race. Capitalism is again ripping apart & reconstructing the world, and nothing will be the same. Not race, not nation, not gender, and certainly not whatever culture you used to have.

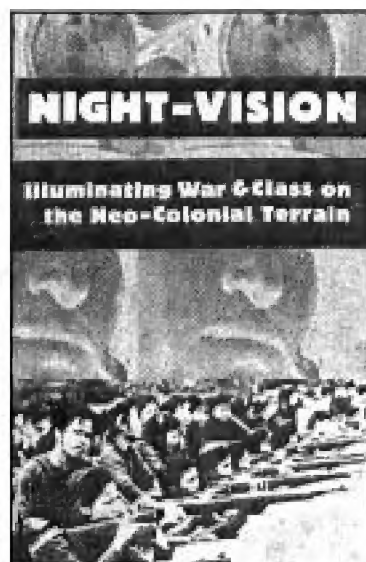
Now you have outcast groups as diverse as the Aryan Nation and the Queer Nation and the Hip Hop Nation publicly rejecting the right of the u.s. government to rule them...

All the building blocks of human culture - race, gender, nation, and especially class - are being transformed under great pressure to embody the spirit of this neo-colonial age.

—from Preface to *Night-Vision*

"*Night-Vision* was so compelling to me because it has a spirit of militancy which reformist feminism tries to kill. It has that raw, unmediated truth-telling which I think we are going to need in order to deal with the fascism that's upon us."

—bell hooks,
critical theorist



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RECOMMENDED READING

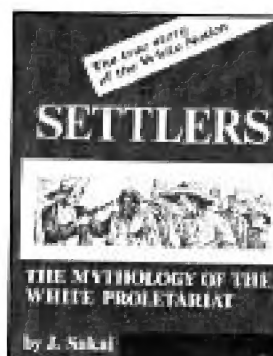
Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat, by J. Sakai

"*Settlers, the Mythology of the White Proletariat*, caused quite a stir in the anti-imperialist white left and among nationalists of the Third World nations within the confines of the U.S. empire as well as anarchists and Moslems of this hemisphere. In short, among all of us who are ready and willing to smash or dismantle the empire, for whatever reasons, and whatever reasoning."

—Kuwasi Balagoon

New Afrikan Anarchist &

Black Liberation Army fighter, 1946-1986



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Instead of a Bibliography

The following is not a definitive or final list, but provides some of the ideas, information and insights that this book draws upon:

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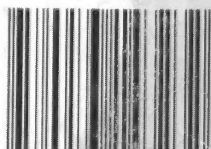


Now, in this exploration, we are moving onto the ground of meta-politics. Wild, vast and more primal than the little, fenced-in suburban plots of what amerikkka calls "politics". From the rape bordellos of the Balkans to the mass murder by AIDS in Afrika, women are being pushed to understand men's society and, most importantly, ourselves, in a different way. The longest Amazon journey begins today.

BOTTOMFISH
BLUES

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